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Thomas F. Torrance

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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN WITHERSPOON, D.D.

SOMTEIME MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT PAISLEY, AND LATE PRESIDENT OF PRINCETON COLLEGE, IN NEW JERSEY.

CONTAINING

ESSAYS, SERMONS, &c.

ON

IMPORTANT SUBJECTS;

INTENDED TO ILLUSTRATE AND ESTABLISH THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION BY GRACE, AND TO POINT OUT ITS INFLUENCE ON HOLINESS OF LIFE.

TOGETHER WITH HIS

LECTURES ON MORAL PHILOSOPHY, ELOQUENCE, AND DIVINITY;

HIS SPEECHES IN THE AMERICAN CONGRESS;

AND MANY OTHER VALUABLE PIECES, NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED IN THIS COUNTRY.

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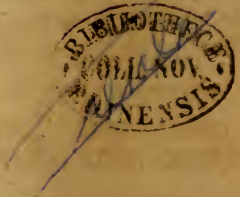
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ESSAYS

ON

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J. TURNBULL, *Printer.*

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AN

ESSAY

ON

MONEY,

AS A MEDIUM OF COMMERCE;

WITH

REMARKS ON THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF PAPER ADMITTED INTO GENERAL CIRCULATION.

FROM every channel of public intelligence we learn, that there is a diſpoſition in many of the legiſlatures of this country, to emit bills of credit by authority of government, and to make them in ſome meaſure at leaſt, or in ſome caſes, a legal tender for debts already contracted. This is a matter of great delicacy and danger. It has occaſioned a controverſial diſcuſſion of the ſubject in pamphlets and periodical publications. A few plauſible things, and but a few that deſerve that character, have been publiſhed in defence of the meaſure. Many ſhrewd and ſenſible things have been offered againſt it: but even theſe laſt have not been ſo connected and ſatisfying, as they might and ought to have been. Some of the pieces have been verboſe and declamatory, with many repeti-

tions; others have been full of antitheſes, quaint ſayings, and witticiſms, which have no great tendency to convince or perſuade; and ſome have been mingled with the local and party politics of particular ſtates. Perhaps theſe different ways of writing may be very proper for ſeveral claſſes of readers, and have a good effect: but there are certainly others who would require a different treatment, becauſe their miſtakes are owing not to deceitful intentions, but to erroneous judgment. This has given me a ſtrong deſire to try what can be done upon the ſubject by diſpaſſionate reaſoning. By this I mean, endeavouring to carry the matter back to its firſt principles, to explain them in ſo ſimple a manner, as that the unlearned may underſtand them; and then to deduce the practical conſequences with the general theory full in view.

It is impoſſible to reach my purpoſe, without ſaying many things which in a ſeparate and detached manner have been ſaid by others; but this muſt be forgiven me; becauſe I mean to lay the whole ſyſtem before the reader, and every part in its proper order and connection. Let us then begin by conſidering what gave riſe to money, and what is its nature and uſe? If there were but one man upon the earth, he would be obliged to prepare a hut for his habitation, to dig roots for his ſuſtenance, to provide ſkins or fig-leaves for his covering, &c.; in ſhort, to do every thing for himſelf. If but one or two more were joined with him, it would ſoon be found that one of them would be more ſkilful in one ſort of work, and another in a

different; ſo that common intereſt would direct them, each to apply his induſtry to what he could do beſt and ſooneſt; to communicate the ſurplus of what he needed himſelf of that ſort of work to the others, and receive of their ſurplus in return. This directly points out to us, that a barter of commodities, or communication of the fruits of induſtry, is the firſt principle, or rather indeed conſtitutes the eſſence of commerce. As ſociety increaſes, the partition of employments is greatly diverſified; but ſtill the fruits of well directed induſtry, or the things neceſſary and uſeful in life, are what only can be called wealth.

In eſtabliſhing a mutual exchange of theſe, the firſt thing neceſſary is a ſtandard of computation, or common meaſure, by which to eſtimate the ſeveral commodities that may be offered to ſale, or may be deſired by purchaſers. Without this it is eaſy to ſee that the barter of commodities is liable to very great difficulties, and very great errors. This ſtandard or common meaſure muſt be ſomething that is well known to both parties, and of general or common uſe. As the firſt eſſays in any things are generally rude and imperfect; ſo I think it appears from the monuments of remote antiquity, that in the early ſtages of ſociety, cattle were the firſt things made uſe of as a ſtandard *. But it

* Servius Tullius, one of the Roman kings, is ſaid to have ſtamped ſome pieces with the figure of cattle; an ox, or a sheep. This was as much as to ſay, this piece is of the value of an ox or a ſheep. Hence it is ſaid, the Roman word *pecunia*, comes from *pecus*, cattle. Others

would ſoon appear that this was a moſt inaccurate meaſure; becauſe one ox might be as good as two, from ſize, fatneſs, or other circumſtances. Therefore in place of this ſucceeded meaſures both of dry and liquid, that is, corn, wine, and oil. The firſt of theſe was of all others the moſt proper ſtandard, becauſe univerſally neceſſary, and liable to little variation. Men, upon an average, would probably eat nearly the ſame quantity in the moſt diſtant ages and countries. It ſeems to me, that this circumſtance of a ſtandard of computation being neceſſary in commerce, and the firſt thing neceſſary, has been in a great meaſure overlooked by moſt writers on money, or rather it has been confounded with the ſtandard value of the ſign, although eſſentially different from it; and the equivocal uſe of the terms has occaſioned great confuſion. I muſt however obſerve, not only that this muſt neceſſarily be taken in, but that if we confine ourſelves to a ſtandard of computation only, ſome known commodity, as meaſured grain, is better, and more intelligible and unalterable than any money whatever, that either has been or will be made. The great alteration in the value of gold and ſilver is known to every perſon who has but dipped into hiſtory; and indeed is known to many, even by memory, in this country, ſince its firſt ſettlement *.

have thought it was from the use of leather for money, *quasi pecudum corio*. But the first etymology seems to be the best. See a subsequent note.

* There are two estates near one of the colleges in Scotland, which were originally taxed an equal number of

But after a ſtandard of computation had been agreed upon, in commerce, even of the moſt moderate extent, ſomething farther would be abſolutely neceſſary. The actual and immediate barter of commodities could in a few inſtances take place. A man might have the thing that I wanted to purchaſe, but he might not need or deſire what I was willing to give for it. Another might want what I had to ſpare, but not have what I wanted to purchaſe with it. Beſides, bulky or periſhable commodities could not be carried about at an uncertainty, or with ſafety. Therefore, it became very early neceſſary, that there ſhould be ſome ſign or ſigns agreed upon, which ſhould repreſent the abſent commodities, or rather ſhould repreſent the ſtandard of computation, in all its diviſions and multiplications. Theſe ſigns muſt be ſuch as could eaſily be carried about, and therefore could be readily applied to every kind of tranſactions, which were connected with the commutation of property.

bolls of grain (a boll is about 6 bushels) to that institution. In very remote times, it pleased the proprietor of one of these estates, with consent of the college, to convert the payment into money, according to the then current value, which was a groat, or four pence sterling for a boll. At this present time, the one of these farms pays the same number of bolls, that the other does of groats; which is about thirty-two for one. There is also said to be existing an old lease of a burrow acre near a town in Scotland, for which the tenant was to pay a boll of wheat, and a boll of barley, or if he did not bring the grain between Christmass and Candlemass, the proprietor was not obliged to accept of it, but he must pay a sum which is now 10-12ths of a penny sterling for the boll of wheat, and 8-12ths for the boll of barley.

Let us examine the nature and meaning of these signs more particularly. They are of the nature of a tally, that is to say, they are intended to mark and ascertain a fact. Now the fact is, that the person who can shew those signs, having purchased them by his goods or industry, is entitled to receive from somebody, a certain value, or to a certain amount, which they specify, of the standard of computation. They have always a reference to the standard of computation, and at last, by that known reference, the distinction between them and the standard of computation is lost, and they become a secondary standard of computation themselves. Thus a piece is intended at first to be of the value of a measure of grain; but at last men come to make their bargain by the number of pieces instead of the number of measures; using the sign for the thing signified. Thus also, sometimes at least, an ideal measure, generated by the other two, comes to be the standard of computation; as in England, the pound sterling is the money unit, though there be no coin precisely corresponding to it. This is sufficient to explain the relation of the sign to the standard of computation, and at last, if I may speak so, its consolidation with it.

I have said above, that the person possessing the sign is entitled to receive a certain value from *somebody*. The reason of this is, because his debtor is not the same in every state of things. If we consider the sign as given from one individual to another, it is of the nature of a promissory note, and is a confession of having received so much property. Probably there were often such signs or tokens

given in the infancy of ſociety; and it would then ſignify, that if the ſeller were to come again, at a diſtance of time, and find the buyer in poſſeſſion of ſuch goods as he wanted, he would be entitled to receive the amount of the ſign or token that had been given him. But the convenience of uſing ſigns is ſo great, that it would immediately occaſion their being made uſe of by general conſent, expreſs or implied; and, at laſt, the matter would be taken under the direction of the ruling part of the community. In both caſes, but eſpecially in this laſt, the ſociety becomes bound to the perſon who receives the ſigns for his goods or induſtry, that they ſhall be to him of the value that they ſpecify. I will afterwards ſhew, that this was not the firſt but the laſt ſtep taken in the uſe of ſigns, and give the reaſons for it; but it is proper to mention it now, when we are conſidering the nature and uſe of ſigns in that ſingle view.

Let it be obſerved here that as it was before ſaid, if we aim at no more than a ſtandard of computation, ſome commodities are not only as good, but better than any money, ſo if we confine ourſelves to a ſign only ſeparate from a ſtandard, many things that might be named are not only as good, but far better than either the ſtandard itſelf, or what we call money, becauſe they are much more eaſily reckoned, tranſported, and concealed. This appears particulary from the ſtate of ſigns in modern times, after ſo much experience and improvement has taken place. For if we can guard ſufficiently againſt the dangers to which they are expoſed, ſigns inconceivably facilitate commerce. We can put any value

we pleaſe in an obligation written on a few inches of paper, and can ſend it over the world itſelf at very little expence, and conceal it ſo eaſily that there ſhall be no danger of its being taken from us.

But it muſt have appeared, and did ſpeedily appear, that all mere ſigns labour under an eſſential defect. They depend ultimately on the faith or credit of the perſons uſing or anſwerable for them. Now, whether theſe be individuals or the multitude by general cuſtom and implied conſent, or even the ruling part of the ſociety, there is very great uncertainty. Therefore ſomething farther is neceſſary to make a complete ſymbol or medium of general commerce, and that is, *a pledge* or ſtandard of value that may be a ſecurity or equivalent for the thing given for it, and at all times be ſufficient to purchaſe a like value of any thing that may be needed by him that holds it. An abſent commodity well known, or even in idea well underſtood, may be a ſtandard of computation and common meaſure; any thing almoſt whatever may be a ſign, though, ſince the art of writing has been known, paper is the beſt, but both are eſſentially defective; there is wanting a value in the ſign, that ſhall give not only a promiſe or obligation, but actual poſſeſſion of property for property.

The mentioning of theſe three diſtinct ends to be ſerved by the medium of commerce, and illuſtrating them ſeparately, was not to convey the idea that there were three ſteps of this kind taken at a diſtance of time from each other, or that men firſt continued long to deal in groſs barter; and after that invented ſigns, and were content with them

for another period; and at laſt, perfected the plan, by getting ſigns poſſeſſed of real value. On the contrary, it was to ſhew that any thing uſed as a medium of univerſal or general commerce, muſt be able to ſerve all the three fore-mentioned purpoſes; and that if there is any production of nature, or fabrication of art, that can unite the whole, at leaſt as far as they are capable of being united, this muſt be the great *deſideratum*. Now it has been found in experience, that the precious metals, eſpecially thoſe now called by that name, gold and ſilver, do anſwer all the three ends in a great degree. It cannot be denied that they have been uſed for this purpoſe, in fact, from the earlieſt times, and through every nation in the old world, and indeed alſo in the new, with ſuch exception only as will confirm the principles of the theory. If any man thinks that this has happened by accident, or through the whim or caprice of mankind, as one would ſuſpect from the language ſometimes uſed in ſpeech and writing, he is greatly miſtaken. No effect of whim or accident ever was ſo uniform or ſo laſting. The truth is, that theſe metals do poſſeſs in a great degree ſuperior to every thing elſe, the qualities neceſſary for the purpoſes mentioned above.

This will appear to any impartial perſon who will conſider, with a view to the preceding principles, what qualities a medium of general commerce ought to poſſeſs. It ought then, to be 1. valuable; 2. rare; 3. portable; 4. diviſible; 5. durable. Whoever will examine the matter with attention, muſt perceive that any one of theſe qualities being wholly or greatly wanting, the ſyſ-

tem would be either entirely ruined or remarkably injured. Let us examine them ſeparately.

1. It muſt be *valuable;* that is to ſay, it muſt have an intrinſic worth in itſelf, in ſubſtance diſtinct from the form. By value or intrinſic worth here, muſt be underſtood preciſely the ſame thing that gives to every other commodity its commercial value. Do you aſk what that is? I anſwer, its being either neceſſary or remarkably uſeful for the purpoſes of life in a ſocial ſtate, or at leaſt ſuppoſed to be ſo: and therefore the object of human deſire. Without this it could be no more than a bare ſign; nor indeed ſo uſeful in this view as many other ſigns. But we want ſomething that muſt not be only a ſtandard of computation, but a ſtandard of value; and therefore capable of being a pledge and ſecurity to the holder, for the property that he has exchanged for it. It is likely ſome will ſay, What is the intrinſic value of gold and ſilver? They are not wealth; they are but the ſign or repreſentative of commodities. Superficial philoſophers, and even ſome men of good underſtanding not attending to the nature of currency, have really ſaid ſo. What is gold, ſay ſome, the value is all in the fancy; you can neither eat nor wear it; it will neither feed, clothe, nor warm you. Gold, ſay others, as to intrinſic value, is not ſo good as iron, which can be applied to many more uſeful purpoſes. Theſe perſons have not attended to the nature of commercial value, which is in a compound *ratio* of its uſe and ſcarceneſs. If iron were as rare as gold, it would probably be as valuable, perhaps more ſo. How many inſtances are there of things, which, though

a certain proportion of them is not only valuable, but indiſpenſably neceſſary to life itſelf, yet which from their abundance have no commercial value at all. Take for examples, air and water. People do not bring theſe to market, becauſe they are in ſuperabundant plenty. But let any circumſtances take place that render them rare, and difficult to be obtained, and their value immediately riſes above all computation. What would one of thoſe who were ſtifled in the black hole at Calcutta, have given to get but near a window for a little air? And what will the crew of a ſhip at ſea, whoſe water is nearly expended, give for a freſh ſupply?

Gold and ſilver have intrinſic value as metals, becauſe from their ductility, durability, and other qualities, they are exceedingly fit for domeſtic utenſils, and many purpoſes in life. This circumſtance was the foundation of their uſe as a medium of commerce, and was inſeparable from it. No clearer proof of this can be adduced, than that in the earlieſt times, even when uſed in commerce, they were weighed before they were divided into ſmaller pieces, and paſſed in tale. They muſt ſurely then have had intrinſic value; for their value was in proportion to their bulk or quantity. This circumſtance as a ſign made them worſe, but as a valuable metal made them better. The ſame thing appears as clearly from the practice of modern times. Even when they are taken into the management of the rulers of ſociety, and ſtamped under various denominations, there muſt be an exact regard had to their commerical value. The ſtamp upon them is the *ſign*, the intrinſic worth of the metal is

the *value*. It is now found, and admitted by every nation, that they muſt give to every piece that denomination and value in legal currency, that it bears in bullion; and if any do otherwiſe, there is neither authority nor force ſufficient to make it paſs *.

The author referred to in the note has given us quotations from three perſons of name in the literary world in ſupport of a contrary opinion. The firſt is Dr. Franklin, whom he makes to ſay, "Gold and ſilver are not intrinſically of equal value with iron; a metal of itſelf capable of many more beneficial uſes to mankind. Their value reſts chiefly on the eſtimation they *happen* to be in among the generality of nations, and the credit given to the opinion that that eſtimation will continue; otherwiſe a pound of gold would not be a real equivalent for a buſhel of wheat." The ſecond is Anderſon on National Induſtry, who ſays, "Money conſidered in itſelf, is of no value; but in many civilized nations, who have found how convenient it is for

* An author on this subject in a pamphlet lately published, says, "The value of the precious metals is however enhanced by their peculiar aptitude to perform the office of an universal money beyond any real inherent value they possess. This extrinsic value of gold and silver, which belongs to them under the modification of coin or bullion, is totally distinct from their inherent value as a commodity." I do not very well comprehend what this gentleman means by the intrinsic value of gold and silver. Perhaps it is the stamp or nominal value affixed to them by the state; but whatever it is, I will venture to assure him, that their value as coin is so far from being totally distinct from, that it must be precisely the same with, their value as a commodity.

facilitating the barter or exchange of one commodity for another, it has received an artificial value; ſo that although uſeleſs in itſelf, it has come to be accepted among all civilized nations, as a token proving that the perſon who is poſſeſſed of it, had given ſomething of real value in exchange for it, and is on that account accepted of by another in exchange for ſomething that is of real utility and intrinſic worth." The third is Sir James Stuart, who ſays, "By money, I underſtand any commodity which purely in itſelf is of no material uſe to man, but which acquires ſuch an eſtimation from his opinion of it, as to become the univerſal meaſure of what is called value, and an adequate equivalent for any thing alienable." The name of any man, how great ſoever, will not have much weight with me, when I perceive that in any inſtance he has miſtaken his ſubject. This I believe, has been the caſe with all the gentlemen juſt mentioned. There is a conſiderable confuſion in the ideas expreſſed by the laſt two; but the thing in which they all agree, and for which they are adduced by this author, is, that they ſeem to deny the intrinſic value of gold and ſilver, and to impute the eſtimation in which they are held, to accidental opinion. Now I muſt beg leave to obſerve, as to the compariſon of the intrinſic worth of gold and iron, if it were poſſible to determine whether, on ſuppoſition of iron and gold being in equal quantity, the one or the other would be the moſt valuable, it would not be worth a ſingle ſtraw in the preſent queſtion; for if iron were the moſt valuable, it would in that caſe be the money, and the gold would be but in the next

degree. Accidental opinion has nothing to do with it. It arifes from the nature of things. As to a pound of gold not being, as to intrinfic value, equivalent to a bufhel of wheat, it might with equal truth be affirmed, that to a man perifhing with hunger, a mountain of gold would not be equivalent to half a pound of bread. But is this any argument againft the intrinfic commercial value of gold, as it has taken place fince the beginning of the world.

As to the other two authors, they feem to fay, that money is in itfelf of no value, and of no material ufe to man. If by *money* they mean gold and filver, the propofition is directly falfe; becaufe they are both of material ufe for the purpofe of focial life. But what has led them into this error has been their abftracting the idea, and taking money in the fingle light of a fign, without confidering it as a ftandard. Then no doubt, even gold, while it continues in this form, is of no other ufe than as a fign of property. But how little is this to the purpofe? For it is equally true of every other commodity. A nail, while it continues a nail, is of no other ufe but joining boards together, or fome fimilar purpofe, and can neither be lock nor key; but a quantity of nails, or the iron which they contain, can be eafily converted into either the one or the other. So a guinea, while it continues a guinea, is of no ufe whatever, but as an inftrument of commerce; but the gold of which a guinea confifts, can eafily be converted into a ring, or any thing which its quantity will reach. This is what is called, with perfect propriety, its *intrinfic value*.

2. That which is the medium of commerce muſt be *rare*. It will not be neceſſary to ſay much upon this, becauſe it has already received ſome illuſtration from what has gone before. It may however be obſerved, that the medium of commerce muſt not only be ſo rare, as to bring it within commercial value in ordinary caſes, but it muſt be much more rare, than moſt other things, that its value may be increaſed, and a ſmall quantity of it may repreſent goods of conſiderable variety and bulk. If gold and ſilver were only twenty times as plentiful as they are at preſent, they would ſtill have a proper value, could be bought and ſold, and applied to many uſeful purpoſes, but they would be quite unfit for general circulation.

3. The circulating medium muſt be *portable*. It muſt be capable of being carried to a diſtance with little trouble or expence, and of paſſing from hand to hand with eaſe and expedition. This is one of the reaſons why it muſt be rare; but it deſerves mention alſo by itſelf, bacauſe it is poſſible to conceive of things that may be both valuable and rare, and yet incapable of being carried about, and paſſing from one to another. Some precious drugs, and ſome curioſities, may be ſo rare as to have a high value, and yet may be quite improper for circulation.

4. The medium of commerce muſt be *diviſible*. It ought to be capable of diviſion into very ſmall quantities. This is neceſſary in order to anſwer the diviſion of many commodities, and the conveniency of perſons of different ranks. It is of ſuch importance, that in the calculations of a complex

and diverſified commerce, we find diviſions and fractional parts even of the ſmalleſt coins or denominations of money, that have ever yet been brought into uſe.

5. Laſtly. The medium of commerce ought to be *durable*. It ought to have this quality on two accounts; firſt, that in perpetually paſſing from hand to hand, it may not be broken or waſted; and, ſecondly that if it is preſerved or laid up, as may be ſometimes neceſſary, and often agreeable or profitable, it may not be liable to be ſpeedily corrupted or conſumed.

All theſe particulars are not of equal moment, and they have an intimate relation one to another; yet each of them is ſingly and ſeparately of importance, perhaps more than will be at firſt view apprehended. I think it is alſo plain that there is nothing yet known to mankind, in which they are all ſo fully united, as they are in gold and ſilver; which is the true reaſon why theſe metals have been applied as the inſtrument of commerce, ſince the beginning of the world, or as far back as hiſtory enables us to penetrate *.

* It has been ſuggeſted to me by a friend, that gold and ſilver poſſeſs another quality different from all the above, which, in an eminent degree, fits them for circulation as a medium, *viz.* that they are *equable*. The meaning of this expreſſion is, that the metal of each of theſe ſpecies, when pure, is of the ſame fineneſs and worth, and perfectly ſimilar, from whatever different mines, or from whatever diſtant parts it may have been procured; which, it is ſaid, is not the caſe with any other metal. It is affirmed, that the copper or lead that comes from one mine, will be preferable to that which comes from another, even

It will probably throw ſome light upon the above theory, if we take a brief view of the matter, as it has taken place in fact from the beginning of the world. This may be done now to the greater advantage, that the effects of particular cauſes, and the events that will take place in ſociety in particular circumſtances, have been ſo fully aſcertained by the experience of ages, and the progreſs of ſcience, that we are able to make a better uſe of the few remains of ancient hiſtory, than could have been done by thoſe who lived nearer to the events which are recorded. It appears then, that the diſcovery and uſe of metals was one of the earlieſt attainments of mankind. This might naturally be expected if they were within reach at all, becauſe of their very great utility in all works of induſtry, and indeed for all the purpoſes of convenience and luxury. Therefore, I ſuppoſe this fact will not be doubted: but it is a truth neither ſo obvious nor ſo much known, that gold, ſilver, and braſs, or rather copper, were the moſt ancient metals, and all of them antecedent to iron *. Theſe metals being applied

after this last has been refined to as high a degree as is possible; but that all gold and silver completely refined are perfectly alike, whether they come from Asia, Africa, or America. I do not pretend to a certain knowledge of this; but if it be true, it is well worthy of being mentioned in this disquisition.

* See upon this subject President Goguet's Rise and Progress of Laws, Arts and Sciences. He has not only sufficiently proved the fact, but also assigned the most probable reason for it, that these metals were found in many places of the earth almost pure, so as to need very little art in refining; whereas extracting iron from the ore is

to all the purpoſes of life, came of courſe to conſtitute a great part of the wealth of the people of ancient times. I have mentioned braſs, becauſe it was one of the metals earlieſt known, and upon the very principles above laid down, was in the beginning made uſe of for money by many ancient nations. Its being now in a great meaſure left out is an illuſtration and proof of what has been already ſaid. It is left out for no other reaſon than its having loſt one of the neceſſary qualities, *viz. rarity*. That it was made uſe of for money amongſt the Hebrews appears from many circumſtances. We read of gold, ſilver, and braſs, brought as contributions to the tabernacle ſervice in the time of Moſes, and to the building of the temple in David's. That braſs was made uſe of as money in the early times of the Greeks and Romans, appears both from the aſſertions of hiſtorians, and from the very languages of both nations, for there it is made uſe of to ſignify money in general *. That it ceaſed to ſerve that

neither ſo easy nor ſo obvious. We learn from Homer, that in the wars of Troy, the weapons of war, offenſive and defenſive, were of copper; and ſome hiſtorians tell us that they had a method of tempering or hardening it ſo as to make it tolerably fit for the purpoſe, though certainly not equal to iron or ſteel.

* In the Roman language, *æs* ſignifies not only braſs, but money in general, and from it many other words are derived; as, *ararium*, the treaſury; *æs alienum*, debt; *ære mutare*, to buy or ſell money, &c. So in the Greek tongue, *chalkos* ſignifies brass, *achalkos* and *achalkein*, to be without money, or poor. When the other metals came to be in uſe as money, the words received the ſame

purpoſe afterwards cannot be accounted for in any other way than as above, eſpecially as the neglect of it has been juſt as univerſal as the uſe of it was formerly.

We are alſo fully ſupported by hiſtory in affirming, that all theſe metals were at firſt eſtimated and paſſed in commerce by weight. We ſee that Abraham gave to Ephron for the cave of Machpelah, four hundred ſhekels of ſilver *. The Greek money was of different weights from the lower ſorts to the talent, which was the largeſt. The old Roman word *Pondo* was, as it were, the ſtandard, and the diviſions of it conſtituted their different denominations. From this we ſeem to have derived the Engliſh word pound. Very ſoon, however, they came to have either coins, or at leaſt ſmall pieces reckoned by number. Abimelech gave to Abraham, as Sarah's brother, one thouſand *keſeph*; and Joſeph was ſold for twenty *keſeph*, and he gave to his brother Benjamin three hundred *keſeph*. As the word *keſeph* ſignifies ſilver, they muſt have been reckoned by tale, and are probably very juſtly

meaning in the language, as, *Argenti ſitis—auri ſacra fames*, the deſire of money. Things proceeded in a way perfectly ſimilar in the three ancient nations of whom we have the diſtinctest accounts, the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans. *Nahus keseph zahaw*, in Hebrew; *chalkos arguros* and *chrusos* in Greek; and *æs argentum* and *aurum*, in Latin, are all used for money in general.

* See Gen. xxiii. 16. And Abraham weighed to Ephron, the money that he had ſaid, in the preſence of the ſons of Heth, 400 ſhekels of ſilver, current money with the merchant.

tranſlated pieces. Agreeably to all this, the time when the Romans began to coin braſs, and ſome hundred years afterwards, ſilver and gold is diſtinctly mentioned by the hiſtorians *.

It may be proper to obſerve here, that ſeveral antiquaries have mentioned that ſome barbarous nations made uſe of baſer metals, ſuch as lead, tin, iron, and even leather, ſhells, and bark of trees for money. This is no way contrary to the above theory, for ſome nations might indeed uſe lead, iron, and tin, as things of value, upon the ſame principles as others uſed gold, ſilver, and braſs. I think it is ſaid, and indeed it is more than probable, that the nails given by our voyagers to the inhabitants of the South-ſea iſlands, paſſed from hand to hand as inſtruments of commerce. As to leather, ſhells, *&c.* I ſuſpect ſome part of this is fabulous; but if it did take place in any meaſure, it has been a rude eſſay, uſing the ſign ſeparately from the ſtandard, and could not be of any great extent or long duration. We know indeed of one nation, after ſociety had been far advanced, that made uſe of iron, even when very plentiful, for money, *viz.* the Lacedemonians. But this was not at all from rudeneſs or

* We have the express testimony of Pliny upon this subject, lib. 33. cap. 3. "Servius rex primus signavit æs. Antea rudi usos Romæ Timaus tradit. Signatum est nota pecudum unde et pecunia appellanta.—Servius first coined brass. Timaus says, they used it formerly rough or uncoined at Rome. It was marked with the figure of cattle, whence also it was called *pecunia*." The same author tells us, that silver began to be coined at Rome in the 485th year of the city, and gold 72 years after.

ignorance; it was one of Lycurgus's extraordinary inſtitutions, who intended by it (and did not conceal his intention) to baniſh riches, or real and proper money, from the ſtate. He indeed baniſhed induſtry at the ſame time, for none of his citizens were allowed even to be huſbandmen, or to cultivate their lands. This was left to the ſlaves. I do not find, therefore, that there is any thing in hiſtory deſerving credit, that militates againſt the theory above laid down.

Having thus laid down the theory of money, and ſupported it by hiſtory and experience, I proceed to draw a few inferences from it, and apply them to ſome opinions which have taken place, and ſome meaſures which have been adopted or propoſed with reſpect to currency and commerce in this country. In the *firſt* place, the above theory will enable every intelligent perſon to fix in his mind preciſely what is or ought to be the meaning of a *circulating medium*. This phraſe is in every body's mouth, and we meet with it continually in the eſſays publiſhed in the newſpapers, and the ſpeeches of ſenators in public aſſemblies. We may ſay of this as controverſial divines uſed to ſay long ago, that a miſconception of this is the *proton pſeudos*, the radical error. Not long ſince a writer in one of the papers ſaid it was agreed on all hands that there is at preſent a ſcarcity of a circulating medium. To this I anſwer, that it is not agreed upon on any hand, but among thoſe who are wholly ignorant of the meaning of the expreſſion. The circulating medium is not yours nor mine; it is not the riches of Holland, nor the poverty of Sweden. It is that in-

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definite quantity of the precious metals that is made uſe of among the nations connected in commerce. Whether any particular perſon, city, or nation, is rich or poor, has more or leſs comparatively of it, is nothing to the purpoſe. Every one will receive of the circulating medium that quantity which he is entitled to by his property or induſtry. It has been ſhewn that rarity is one of the qualities of a circulating medium. If it were more rare than it is, a leſs quantity would be ſufficient to repreſent a ſtated meaſure of property. If it were more plentiful than it is, a greater quantity would be neceſſary; but the comparative riches or poverty of nations or perſons would be altogether the ſame.

Is any body ignorant that half a century ago in this country, a man might have bought a buſhel of wheat for one quarter of a dollar, for which now he muſt pay a whole dollar. Was not the quarter dollar then as good a circulating medium as the whole dollar is now? And was not the man juſt as rich who had it in his pocket? Undoubtedly. Nay, I muſt further ſay, it was a better circulating medium, becauſe it was of leſs ſize and weight. Has not the quantity of the precious metals increaſed greatly ſince the diſcovery of the mines of South America? Is not the quantity now neceſſary for any conſiderable purchaſe ſo great as to be burdenſome in the tranſportation? The price of a good horſe in ſilver would at preſent be a great incumbrance on a long journey. How eaſy were it to point out places and countries in which there is a greater quantity of the circulating medium than any where elſe, and yet at the ſame time greater na-

tional and perſonal poverty, and probably for this very reaſon. What would it ſignify to a labourer in the mines of Peru, if he ſhould get half a johannes, or even two, for a day's work, if at the ſame time he could hardly purchaſe with both as much proviſion as to keep body and ſoul together? Are not theſe things true? Are they not known to be ſo? What then muſt we ſay of the extreme ignorance and inattention, to ſay no worſe, of thoſe perſons who are continually telling us that there is a want of circulating medium? Are not gold and ſilver a circulating medium, whoſe currency is univerſal? Are theſe then too ſcarce for that purpoſe, when there is hardly a negro ſlave, male or female without ſilver buckles in their ſhoes, and many of them with rings and other ornaments of gold, which five hundred years ago would have denoted a prince or princeſs? Perhaps I have inſiſted longer on this than was neceſſary, but I have been induced to it by the frequent complaints upon this ſubject, and the abſurd application of the phraſe, a circulating medium. More reflections will occur, connected with this ſubject, in the ſubſequent parts of my diſcourſe. In the mean time I will cloſe, by ſaying to my reader, you and I may be poor men, the ſtate in which we live may be a poor ſtate, we may want property, rents, reſ urces, and credit, but a circulating medium we want not.

2. From the principles above laid down it will appear, that money having as one of its eſſential qualities, an intrinſic, that is to ſay, a commercial value, it muſt be not only a ſign and ſtandard, or a medium of commerce, but alſo itſelf a commodity

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or a ſubject of commerce. There are many tranſactions reſpecting money in a trading nation, in which it is conſidered ſingly in this view. Theſe it is unneceſſary for me to enumerate, but even where it is applied directly or principally as a medium of alienation, its value as a ſtandard doth and muſt always follow and accommodate itſelf to its value as a commodity. Hence it follows neceſſarily that money muſt be ſubject to every rule that other commodities are ſubject to in buying and ſelling. One of the chief of theſe is, that it muſt riſe and fall in price according to the quantity that is brought to market, compared with the demand there is for it. This is an unavoidable conſequence, and as neceſſary in the caſe of money as in that of any commodity whatever. If a greater quantity of money than before is brought into any country, even though brought by the faireſt and moſt honourable means, *viz.* increaſing induſtry and profitable trade, it will have the effect of raiſing the price of other commodities in general, and of induſtry, which is the ſource of all commodities. But we muſt obſerve, that men are apt to view this in a wrong light. One commodity may riſe or fall by its own plenty or ſcarceneſs; but when there is a great and general riſe of prices, of all commodities, it would be at leaſt as proper, or rather much more ſo, to ſay, that money had fallen, than that goods had riſen.

We had ſo large experience of this during the war, by the exceſſive emiſſions of paper money, that it needs hardly any illuſtration. It is true, ſome perſons did then, and do now ſuppoſe, that

the depreciation of the money was owing as much to the diſaffection of ſome inhabitants, and the counterfeiting, and other artful endeavours of our enemies to deſtroy it, as to the increaſed quantity. But in this they were quite miſtaken. Jealouſy or ſuſpicion of the money would have had very different effects from a gradual and continual riſe of prices. If I meet with a ſuſpicious piece of money, I do not raiſe the price of my goods, but refuſe to ſell them. This was indeed the caſe with all thoſe who doubted the money of Congreſs in time of the war. Beſides it is plain, that the American cauſe was moſt doubtful, and its enemies moſt numerous in the years 1776 and 1777, and yet the currency of the money was then very general, and its depreciation ſlow; whereas in the three following years, when in conſequence of the French treaty and other European alliances, and confidence of the public in the cauſe was increaſed, the depreciation was accelerated in an amazing degree. I muſt alſo here make a remark upon another opinion often expreſſed during the war, that the depreciation muſt have been owing to other cauſes than the quantity, becauſe it was greater than what they called the natural depreciation, in conſequence of the quantity. By this they meant, that it was not regular; but when the quantity had ariſen, ſuppoſe to five for one, the depreciation was as fifteen or twenty for one. Theſe perſons did not underſtand the depreciation of a commodity in conſequence of its quantity, for it is not regular and equable, as in arithmetical progreſſion, but rapid and increaſing, ſo as ſoon to get beyond all computation. If there

is in any country but one tenth part more of any commodity than there is any demand for, the price will probably fall more than one half; and if there is double or treble the quantity needed, it will be what merchants call a drug, that cannot be sold at all, but if it be a perishable commodity, must sink in the hand of the possessor.

I have said above, that the increase of money, even though in consequence of national prosperity, that is to say, internal industry and profitable trade, will yet necessarily have the effect of raising the price of industry, and its fruits. This, however, must evidently be in a far higher degree, and attended with much more pernicious effects, when it is thrown into circulation without industry; as when silver is found in capacious mines, or paper is issued by the authority of a state, without measure and without end. I verily believe, that if as many millions of silver dollars had fallen from heaven and been thrown into circulation as there were paper ones issued by the United States, the disorder would have been as great or greater than it was. At least it would have been so at first, the difference would have been, that silver being current over all, it would have soon gone abroad and found its level, so that the alteration would have been ultimately not in the United States, but in the general circulating medium over the whole earth. Those, however, among whom it was first found, and who received it without industry, would have suffered most by it. Among them it would have produced laziness and luxury. Other nations would have drained it from them only by superior industry.

The ſtate of the Spaniſh monarchy at preſent ought to be, and indeed in a great meaſure has been, a leſſon to the whole world. At the time when they got poſſeſſion of South-America they were the moſt powerful and wealthy ſtate in Europe. Would any man at that time have been reckoned ſound in his judgment who would have affirmed, that they would have grown poor, by the means of the gold and ſilver mines? Yet it has happened ſo, and now there is hardly any politician ſo ſhallow but he can aſſign the reaſon of it. They thought that gold and ſilver would at once procure them every thing without working; but forgot that the more they had of it, they muſt pay ſo much the more to thoſe who were willing to work for them.

3. The above principles will clearly ſhew, that what is commonly called paper money, that is, bills bearing that the perſon holding them is entitled to receive a certain ſum ſpecified in them, is not, properly ſpeaking, money at all. It is barely a ſign without being a pledge or ſtandard of value, and therefore is eſſentially defective as a medium of univerſal commerce. I will afterwards ſpeak of the different kinds of it, and point out their real and proper uſes; but in the mean time I obſerve, that to arm ſuch bills with the authority of the ſtate, and make them a legal tender in all payments, is an abſurdity ſo great, that it is not eaſy to ſpeak with propriety upon it. Perhaps it would give offence if I ſhould ſay, it is an abſurdity reſerved for American legiſlatures; no ſuch thing having ever been attempted in the old countries. It has been found, by the experience of ages, that money

muſt have a ſtandard of value, and if any prince or ſtate debaſe the metal below the ſtandard, it is utterly impoſſible to make it ſucceed. How then can it be poſſible to make that ſucceed, which has no value at all? In all ſuch inſtances, there may be great injuries done to particular perſons by wiping off debts; but to give ſuch money general currency is wholly impoſſible. The meaſure carries abſurdity in its very face. Why will you make a law to oblige men to take money when it is offered them? Are there any who refuſe it when it is good? If it is neceſſary to force them, does not this demonſtrate that it is not good? We have ſeen indeed this ſyſtem produce a moſt ludicrous inverſion of the nature of things. For two or three years we conſtantly ſaw and were informed of creditors running away from their debtors, and the debtors purſuing them in triumph, and paying them without mercy.

Let us examine this matter a little more fully. Money is the medium of commercial tranſactions. Money is itſelf a commodity. Therefore every tranſaction in which money is concerned, by being given or promiſed, is ſtrictly and properly ſpeaking, a bargain, or as it is well called in common language, an agreement. To give, therefore, authority or nominal value by law to any money, is interpoſing by law, in commerce, and is preciſely the ſame thing with laws regulating the prices of commodities, of which, in their full extent, we had ſufficient experience during the war. Now nothing can be more radically unjuſt, or more eminently abſurd, than laws of that nature. Among all civilians, the

tranſactions of commerce are ranged under the head of contracts. Without entering into the nicer diſtinctions of writers upon this ſubject, it is ſufficient for me to ſay, that commerce, or buying and ſelling, is found upon that ſpecies of contracts that is moſt formal and complete. They are called in the technical language, *Onerous contracts*, where the proper and juſt value is ſuppoſed to be given or promiſed, on both ſides. That is to ſay, the perſon who offers any thing to ſale, does it becauſe he has it to ſpare, and he thinks it would be better for him to have the money, or ſome other commodity, than what he parts with; and he who buys, in like manner, thinks it would be better for him to receive the commodity, than to retain the money. There may be miſtakes or fraud in many tranſactions; but theſe do not affect the argument in the leaſt. A fair and juſt value is always ſuppoſed or profeſſed to be given on both ſides.

Well! is it agreed that all commerce is founded on a complete contract? Let then any perſon who will, open as many books as he pleaſes written upon the ſubject, and tell me whether he does not always find there that one of the eſſential conditions of a lawful contract, and indeed the firſt of them is, that it be *free* and *mutual*. Without this it may be ſomething elſe, and have ſome other binding force, but it is not a contract. To make laws therefore, regulating the prices of commodities, or giving nominal value to that which had no value before the law was made, is altering the nature of the tranſaction altogether. Perhaps a compariſon of this with other tranſactions of a different kind

might ſet this matter in a clear light. Suppoſe a man were to ſay to one of our lawgivers upon this ſubject as follows: When you make a law, laying on a tax, and telling me I muſt pay ſo much to the public and common expences of the ſtate, I underſtand this very well. It falls under the head of *authority*. You may lay on an improper or injudicious tax that will operate unequally, or not be productive of what you expect; but ſtill this is within your line, and if I have any complaint, I can only wiſh that at the next election we may get wiſer men. Again, a Juſtice of Peace in time of war may give a preſs-warrant, and take my horſes and waggons to tranſport proviſions or baggage for an army. I underſtand this alſo; writers and reaſoners tell me that it falls under the head of what they call the *rights of neceſſity*. The meaning of this is, that no civil conſtitution can be ſo perfect but that ſome caſes will occur, in which the property of individuals muſt give way to the urgent call of common utility or general danger. Thus we know, that in cities, in caſe of a fire, ſometimes a houſe, without the conſent of its owner, will be deſtroyed to prevent the whole from being conſumed. But if you make a law that I ſhall be obliged to *ſell* my grain, my cattle, or any commodity, at a certain price, you not only do what is unjuſt and impolitic, but with all reſpect be it ſaid, you ſpeak nonſenſe; for I do not *ſell* them at all: you take them from me. You are both buyer and ſeller, and I am the ſufferer only.

I cannot help obſerving that laws of this kind have an inherent weakneſs in them; they are not

only unjuſt and unwiſe, but for the moſt part impracticable. They are an attempt to apply authority to that which is not its proper object, and to extend it beyond its natural bounds; in both which we ſhall be ſure to fail. The production of commodities muſt be the effect of induſtry, inclination, hope, and intereſt. The firſt of theſe is very imperfectly reached by authority, and the other three cannot be reached by it at all. Perhaps I ought rather to have ſaid, that they cannot be directed by it, but they may be greatly counteracted; as people have naturally a ſtrong diſpoſition to reſiſt force, and to eſcape from conſtraint. Accordingly we found in this country, and every other ſociety who ever tried ſuch meaſures found, that they produced an effect directly contrary to what was expected from them. Inſtead of producing moderation and plenty, they uniformly produced dearneſs and ſcarcity. It is worth while to obſerve, that ſome of our legiſlatures ſaw ſo far into theſe matters as to perceive, that they could not regulate the price of commodities, without regulating the price of the induſtry that produced them. Therefore they regulated the price of day-labourers. This however, though but one ſpecies of induſtry, was found to be wholly out of their power.

There were ſome inſtances mentioned at the time when theſe meaſures were in vogue, which ſuperficial reaſoners ſuppoſed to be examples of regulating laws attended with good effects. Theſe were the regulation of the prices of chairs, hackney-coaches, and ticket porters in cities, public ferries, and ſome others. But this was quite miſtaking the

nature of the thing. Theſe inſtances have not the leaſt connection with laws regulating prices in voluntary commerce. In all theſe caſes the perſons who are employed ſolicit the privilege, obtain a licence, and come under voluntary engagements to aſk no higher prices; ſo that there is as complete a free contract as in buying and ſelling in open ſhops. I am ſo fully convinced of the truth and juſtice of the above principles, that I think, were it proper at this time, I could ſhew, that even in the moſt enlightened nations of Europe, there are ſtill ſome laws ſubſiſting which work in direct oppoſition to the intention of their makers. Of this kind in general are the laws againſt foreſtalling and regrating. They are now indeed moſt of them aſleep, and what the lawyers call in deſuetude; but ſo far as they are executed, they have the moſt powerful tendency to prevent, inſtead of promoting, full and reaſonable markets. As an example of our own ſkill in that branch, a law was paſt in Pennſylvania in time of the war preciſely upon that principle. It ordained that in all imported articles there ſhould be but one ſtep between the importer and conſumer, and therefore that none but thoſe who bought from the ſhip ſhould be allowed to ſell again. I cite this inſtance by memory, but am certain that ſuch was the ſpirit of the law. The makers of it conſidered that every hand through which a commodity paſſed muſt have a profit upon it, which would therefore greatly augment the coſt to the conſumer at laſt. But could any thing in the world be more abſurd? How could a family at one hundred miles diſtance from the ſeaport be ſupplied with what they wanted? In

oppoſition to this principle it may be ſafely affirmed, that the more merchants the cheaper goods, and that no carriage is ſo cheap, nor any diſtribution ſo equal or ſo plentiful, as that which is made by thoſe who have an intereſt in it, and expect a profit from it.

I have gone into this detail in order to ſhew that tender laws, arming paper, or any thing not valuable in itſelf with authority, are directly contrary to the very firſt principles of commerce. This was certainly the more neceſſary, becauſe many of the advocates for ſuch laws, and many of thoſe who are inſtrumental in enacting them, do it from pure ignorance, without any bad intention. It may probably have ſome effect in opening their eyes to obſerve, that no paper whatever is a tender in any nation in Europe. Even the notes of the bank of England, which are as good as gold, and thoſe of the bank of Holland, which are conſiderably better *, are not armed with any ſuch ſanction, and are not a legal tender in the proper ſenſe of that word. That is to ſay, though I ſuppoſe both of them, or any other paper circulating in full credit, may be a

* Perhaps it may be proper to inform some readers what this expression refers to. It refers to the agio of the bank of Holland. A bill of that bank generally goes for a little more in payment with any dealer than the sum it specifies, and this advance or difference is called the agio of the Bank, and rises or falls like the rate of exchange. This probably arises from its perfect security, and the very great advantage in point of ease and expedition, in transferring, reckoning, and concealing of paper above gold and silver. It gives occasion to the vulgar saying in that country, That money goes into the bank but never comes out.

tender in equity, so far as that the person offering them without suspicion of their being refused, could not be condemned in any penalty or forfeiture; yet if the person who was to receive the money should say, I am going abroad, I want gold or silver; it would lie upon the debtor and not the creditor to go and get them exchanged. We may perhaps even say more, *viz.* that the coinage of gold and silver in any country is not so much, if at all to oblige persons to receive it at a certain value, as to ascertain them that it is of the value stampt upon it. Without this, ignorant persons would be continually at a loss to know the fineness and the weight of a piece offered to them. This will appear from the two following remarks. (1.) If by any accident in the coinage, or fraud in the officers of the mint, some of the pieces had not the full quantity, or were not of sufficient fineness, though the stamp were ever so genuine, if I could discover the defect, I should be justified in refusing it. (2.) There is sometimes a fluctuation in the comparative value of gold and silver, and in these cases, though no doubt a debtor, till the error that has crept in be rectified by authority, has a right to pay in any lawful money; yet if I were selling goods, and gold had fallen in its value, I might safely say to the customer, in what coin are you to pay me? I will give you a yard of this silk for twenty-one sterling silver shillings, but if you give me a guinea I must have another shilling before I will part with it. The whole of this serves to shew that nothing short of real money, which is of standard value, ought to be enforced by law in a well regulated society.

4. The principles above laid down will enable us to perceive clearly what is the nature of paper circulating as a medium of commerce, what is its real and proper uſe, and what are its dangers and defects. As to its nature, it is a ſign but not a ſtandard. It is properly an obligation, or to uſe a modern commercial phraſe, it is a promiſſory note. It is not money, as has been ſhewn above, but it is a promiſe of ſome perſon or body of men to pay money either on demand or at a particular time, or at ſome general undefined future time. Obligations of this nature are of more ſorts than one. Sometimes they are given by particular perſons, or trading companies, who are conſidered as perſons; and frequently in America they have been given by the legiſlature of the ſtate. In the general definition I have included all kinds of negotiable paper, but it will not be neceſſary to inſiſt upon more than two of them, *viz.* the notes of banking companies, and ſtate emiſſions. Bills of exchange are not ſuppoſed to paſs through many hands, but to proceed as ſpeedily as may be to the place of their payment. Government ſecurities are only bought and ſold like other property, and ſo any bonds or other private obligations, may be transferred as often as people are willing to receive them; but the notes of banking companies, and the ſtate emiſſions of this country are intended to be, properly ſpeaking, a circulating medium. They are of various regular denominations, and intended to anſwer all the purpoſes of money in the ſmaller tranſactions of ſociety as well as the larger, and even go to market for purchaſing the neceſſaries of life.

As to value, ſuch obligations muſt plainly depend upon the credit of the ſubſcriber or obliger, and the opinion or expectation of the receiver. Theſe are mutually neceſſary to their uſe in commerce. Let the reſources or wealth of the ſubſcriber be what they may, it is the public opinion that muſt ultimately give them currency. This opinion, however, may be in ſome inſtances better, and in ſome worſe founded. That paper which may with moſt certainty and expedition be converted into gold and ſilver, ſeems evidently to have the advantage on this account. Therefore the notes of banking companies, while they maintain their credit, and continue to pay on demand, appear to be the beſt calculated for general uſe. They ſeem alſo to have another advantage, that private perſons and companies are upon a footing with the holder of the bills. He can arreſt them, and bring them to account and have juſtice done upon them; whereas he cannot call the legiſlature to account, but muſt wholly depend upon their fidelity as well as reſources. Yet it muſt be owned there have not been wanting inſtances formerly in this country, in which paper emiſſions by the ſtates have obtained full confidence, and met with no impediment in circulation.

Let us now conſider what is the proper uſe of paper currency, or whether it be of any real uſe at all. Many perſons in Europe have declared againſt it altogether as pernicious. I will endeavour to ſtate this matter with all the clearneſs I am capable of, and to give the reaſons for what I ſhall advance. We have ſeen above, that nothing can be more ab-

ſurd than to ſay that we now want a circulating medium, and that paper is neceſſary for that purpoſe. A circulating medium we have already, not in too ſmall, but in too great quantity; ſo that any perſon who underſtands the ſubject may perceive that gold and ſilver, eſpecially the laſt, is loſing at leaſt one of the qualities neceſſary for that purpoſe, and becoming too bulky and heavy for eaſy and convenient tranſportation. Braſs, as has been ſhewn above, was once as juſt and proper a medium of commerce as gold and ſilver are now. It has all the qualities neceſſary for that purpoſe ſtill, except rarity; ſo that if it were not too plentiful and too cheap, it would be money to this day. It is probable that this circumſtance of the abundance and weight of the precious metals is what gives to many ſuch an inclination for paper money. This will appear ſtrange to ſome, yet I believe it is at bottom juſt. The cry with many is, we muſt have paper for a circulating medium, as there is ſuch a ſcarcity of gold and ſilver. Is this juſt? No. They miſtake their own poverty, or the nation's poverty, for a ſcarcity of gold and ſilver; whereas in fact, gold and ſilver uſed as a circulating medium are ſo cheap, and the quantity of a moderate ſum is ſuch an incumbrance that we want paper, which can be much more eaſily carried, and much more effectually concealed. So that, contrary to the vulgar idea, we are obliged to have recourſe to paper in ſeveral caſes, not for want of gold and ſilver, but their too great abundance.

This will appear to be a very uncouth idea to many perſons. What, they will ſay, too great

abundance of gold and silver! when I go about from day to day, and cannot collect what is due to me; when my creditors are calling upon me and I cannot satisfy them. There is a scarcity of money every where. What shall be said to satisfy these persons? I must tell them plainly, It is their poverty, or the nation's poverty, and not a want of gold and silver, and if there were an hundred times as much gold and silver in circulation as there is, their poverty and difficulties would be just the same. If these persons read the scriptures they may there learn, that in Solomon's time the silver was as plentiful *as stones in Jerusalem;* probably they will think that all the people in Jerusalem at that time must have lived like princes, but they must be told, that it was added as a necessary consequence, that *it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.*

If paper is not then needed as a circulating medium, what benefits arise from it? I answer, the uses of paper substituted for money may be summed up under the two following heads; (1.) It is useful for facilitating commerce. (2.) It is useful for anticipating property or extending credit.

(1.) it is useful for facilitating commerce. Nothing can be more advantageous for that pupose than bills of exchange, which, without the actual transportation of money or goods, can transfer property even to the most distant places with the most perfect facility. There have been many persons who have doubted whether any other sort of paper currency is not upon the whole hurtful, but the benefit of this is beyond all question. We shall afterwards compare the advantages and disadvan-

tages of paper money; but at preſent let us leave out the conſideration of the evil that it does, and it is manifeſt that there is ſo great a facility and ſafety in the tranſportation of paper above that of gold and ſilver, that it muſt greatly expedite all mercantile tranſactions, internal and external. Suppoſe one hundred thouſand pounds were to be tranſported but three hundred miles, if it were to be carried in ſilver, what an immenſe load would it be? But beſides the weight, as it could not be concealed, there would be a very great riſk of inviting robbers to ſhare in it. Let it be carefully obſerved, that this good effect of paper is not from the additional quantity thrown into circulation, but from its poſſeſſing ſome advantages ſuperior to gold and ſilver, provided that the credit of it is ſupported. Nor muſt it be forgotten, that it is in great and extenſive negociations only that this advantage is poſſeſſed by paper; for in ſmaller bargains, and that intercourſe between man and man that is carried on every hour, it poſſeſſes no advantage at all; on the contrary, it is liable to wear and waſte, and therefore the ſmaller coins are in all reſpects to be perferred.

(2.) Another uſe of paper in commerce is to extend credit. Though in very large tranſactions the advantage of paper may be great, as it facilitates commerce; yet when we conſider paper as generally circulating, and doing the office of gold and ſilver, it is by the extenſion of credit only, or chiefly, that it can be of any advantage. It is unneceſſary for me, and perhaps not in my power, to mention all the ways in which credit may be in-

creaſed or faciliated by paper. Some will probably be mentioned afterwards; at preſent my buſineſs is to ſhew, that giving credit is one of the advantages, and indeed in my opinion, it is the principle advantage, to be derived from paper circulation of any kind. There are many people whoſe induſtry is damped or limited by want of ſtock or credit, who if they were properly aſſiſted, in theſe reſpects might do ſignal ſervice to themſelves, and the community of which they are members. It has been generally ſaid, and I believe with truth, that the inſtitution of the banks in Scotland has improved the country in the courſe of little more than half a century, to a degree that is hardly credible. It is alſo probable, that the manufactures and commerce of England have been greatly promoted by the eaſy and regular methods of obtaining credit from the public and private banks. I am ſenſible that ſome very intelligent perſons in Britain have condemned the paper circulation even there, and affirmed, that it does more harm than good. It is not neceſſary for me to enter into the arguments on either ſide of that queſtion. All that I am concerned to prove is, that if it does good upon the whole, or whatever good it does in any degree, ariſes from the credit which it is the occaſion of extending; and this I think can hardly be denied. *

* That I may ſtate the matter with fairneſs and fulneſs, I will juſt obſerve, that the enemies of paper ſay, the improvement was only coeval with the banks, but not cauſed by them in whole, nor in any great degree. The banks happened to be nearly coeval with the revolution, and the union of England and Scotland; both which important

Let us next conſider the evil that is done by paper. This is what I would particularly requeſt the reader to attend to, as it was what this diſcourſe was chiefly intended to evince, and what the public ſeems but little aware of. The evil is this. All paper introduced into circulation, and obtaining credit as gold and ſilver, adds to the quantity of the medium, and thereby, as has been ſhown above, increaſes the price of induſtry and its fruits. * This conſequence is unavoidable, and follows as certainly from good paper as bad, or rather more certainly, for the medium is increaſed only by that which obtains credit. At the ſame time this conſequence is local, becauſe the paper does not paſs among other nations, and therefore it works againſt the intereſt of the people who uſe it, and

events are supposed to have been causes of improvement to Scotland. However the experience of the last thirty or forty years appears to be considerably in favour of banks and dealers in money and bills, which I consider as essentially the same.

* This will perhaps be misapprehended by some readers. They will say, a high price for our industry! This is just what we want, and what all desire. But the price I mean here is not the price which you get for your industry, but that which you pay for it. A high price, by a great demand from foreign nations, is your profit; but the cost which you pay for servants, tools, rent of land, &c. lessens that profit, and it is this which is increased by increasing the circulating medium, and not the other. Make as much money as you please, this will not make foreign nations call for any more of your grain, fish, lumber, tobacco, rice, &c. but it will just as certainly make them cost you more before you can bring them to the market, as adding two to three will make five.

neceſſarily draws off their gold and ſilver, which muſt be made uſe of in all foreign payments. Men may think what they pleaſe, but there is no contending with the nature of things. Experience has every where juſtified the remark, that wherever paper is introduced in large quantities, the gold and ſilver vaniſhes univerſally. The joint ſum of gold, ſilver, and paper current, will exactly repreſent your whole commodities, and the prices will be accordingly. It is therefore as if you were to fill a veſſel brim full, making half the quantity water and the other oil; the laſt being ſpecifically lighteſt, will be at the top, and if you add more water, the oil only will run over, and continue running till there is none left. How abſurd and contemptible then is the reaſoning which we have of late ſeen frequently in print, *viz.* the gold and ſilver is going away from us, therefore we muſt have paper to ſupply its place. If the gold and ſilver is indeed going away from us, that is to ſay, if the balance of trade is much againſt us, the paper medium has a direct tendency to increaſe the evil, and ſend it away by a quicker pace.

I have ſaid, that this conſequence follows from all paper, as ſuch, good and bad, ſo far as it enters into circulation; but every one muſt perceive, that there is a peculiar, and indeed a different evil to be feared from paper of a doubtful kind, and eſpecially from that which being doubtful, is obliged to be ſupported by coercive laws. This muſt raiſe general ſuſpicion, and conſequently bring on a ſtagnation of commerce, from univerſal and mutual diſtruſt. For the ſame reaſon it muſt annihiliate

credit, and make every cautious perſon lock up his real money, that is, gold and ſilver, as he cannot tell but he may be cheated in the re-payment. This evil is very extenſive indeed, for it makes people ſuſpicious, not only of what is, but what may be. Though the injury ſhould be but partial, or inconſiderable at preſent, it may become wholly ruinous by ſome unknown future law.

Hence it may be ſeen, that the reſolution of the queſtion, whether it is proper to have paper money at all or not, depends entirely upon another, *viz.* whether the evil that is done by augmenting the circulating medium, is or is not over-balanced by the facility given to commerce, and the credit given to particular perſons, by which their induſtry and exertions are added to the common ſtock. As it is upon this that the queſtion depends, we ſhall find that as the circumſtances of a nation may be different, it may be for or againſt its intereſt to uſe a paper medium. If any nation were in ſuch circumſtances as that credit were either not neceſſary or eaſily obtained; if the country were fully ſettled and the inhabitants fully employed in agriculture, manufactures, and internal commerce, with little foreign trade, any addition to the true money, would be unneceſſary or pernicious. This is probably the ſtate of China at preſent, perhaps in ſome degree alſo of France. On the contrary, if a nation had an extenſive and complicated commerce, and much land to ſettle and improve, the facilitating of commerce, and extending of credit, might be highly beneficial. I do not pretend to ſo exact a knowledge of the ſtate of this country, or

the different parts of it, as to judge with abſolute certainty of what is neceſſary or would be uſeful to it, but am inclined to think that there muſt be ſomething in the ſtate of things in America that makes it either more neceſſary or more expedient to have paper here than in the European ſtates. We are aſſured that in former times many of the ſtates, then colonies, thought it a privilege to be allowed to ſtrike paper money; and we are told by perſons of good underſtanding, that it contributed to their growth and improvement. If this was the caſe, I am confident it was chiefly becauſe it was emitted in the way of a loan-office, and by giving credit to huſbandmen, accelerated the ſettlement and improvement of the ſoil. This queſtion I do not take upon me to decide, and therefore in what follows, deſire I may be conſidered as ſpeaking only hypothetically, the rather, that at preſent the inclination after paper of ſome kind or another ſeems to be ſo ſtrong, that it would be in vain to withſtand it.

If therefore paper is to be employed in circulation, we may ſee from what has been ſaid above, what are the principles on which it ought to be conducted, the ends that ought to be aimed at, and the evils that ought to be avoided. The ends to be aimed at are, the facilitating of commercial tranſactions, and extending of credit to thoſe who are likely to make a proper uſe of it. The plan ſhould be ſo conceived, as that the increaſe of the circulating medium ſhould be as little as poſſible, conſiſtently with theſe ends. It ſhould be perfectly ſecure, ſo as to create an abſolute confidence. And

as it is of the nature of an obligation, no force whatever ſhould be uſed, but the reception of it left entirely to the inclination and intereſt of the receiver. It may be ſafely affirmed, that any deviation from theſe principles, which are deduced from the theory above laid down, will be an eſſential defect in the ſyſtem. If we inquire what ſort of paper will beſt anſwer this deſcription, we find that there is no other ſort uſed in Europe than that of banking companies. The government ſtamping paper to paſs current for coin is unknown there. Notwithſtanding the immenſe ſums which have been borrowed by the Engliſh government, they always prefer paying intereſt for them, to iſſuing paper without value for money. The only thing reſembling it in the Engliſh hiſtory is, James the ſecond coining baſe metal, and affixing a price to it by proclamation; a project contemptible in the contrivance, and abortive in the execution. This ſeems to be a conſiderable preſumption, that the meaſure is upon the whole not eligible. *

The paper of banking companies has many advantages. It is conſidered as perfectly ſafe, becauſe it can be exchanged for gold and ſilver at any time upon demand. Having this ſecurity at bottom, it

* It ſeems to me, that those who cry out for emitting paper money by the legislatures, ſhould take ſome pains to ſtate clearly the difference between this and the European countries, and point out the reaſons why it would be ſerviceable here, and hurtful there; or elſe inſiſt that it would be a wiſe meaſure every where, and recommend the uſe of it to the ſtates of England, France, Holland, &c. who will be much indebted to them for the diſcovery.

is perfectly convenient for transportation, which indeed is common to it with all paper. In addition to this, it is considered as the principal business of all banks to give credit, which, though directly only in favour of commercial, is ultimately useful to many different classes of men. I may upon this observe, that it is the duty of banking companies so to conduct their operations as to extend their regular credit as far as is safe for themselves. If instead of this, as has been supposed at least to have been done by some banks in Britain, they circulate their notes by agents, making purchases in different and distant places, that the sum issued may very far exceed the sum necessary to be kept for probable demands; they are in that case not serving the public at all, but using the money of other people to their own profit. It is also to be observed, that the denomination of their notes should never be very small, it should indeed be as high as is consistent with such a general use as will bring in a sufficient profit. Very small denominations of paper do the greatest injury by entering into universal circulation, and chiefly affecting the industrious part of the community. It was a very great complaint against some banks in Scotland, that they brought down the denominations of their notes as far as ten shillings and some of them even five shillings. If this was an evil, what shall we say of paper, as has been seen in this country, as low as one shilling, six pence, or even three pence value? It is a rule that will hardly admit of any exception, that the higher the denominations of paper bills, the greater the benefit and the less the evil; and on

the contrary, the ſmaller the denominations, the greater the evil and the leſs the benefit. High ſums in paper obligations may perhaps change hands once a week, but a ſhilling or ſix-penny ticket may be in fifty hands in one day.

I muſt mention here what has been often objected againſt banks in America, which, if juſt, would, from the reaſoning in the preceding part of this diſcourſe, tend to their condemnation. It is, that they have deſtroyed credit inſtead of extending it, and have introduced or given occaſion to exceſſive uſury. I am not ſufficiently informed to ſay how far this is really the caſe, but cannot help obſerving, that treating the matter theoretically, as I have all along done, and conſidering the nature of the thing, this does not appear to be a neceſſary conſequence. One would rather think that the regular credit which is or ought to be given by banks ſhould prevent uſury, by ſupplying all thoſe who deſerve to be truſted. Agreeably to this it was found in fact, that the inſtitution of banks in Scotland lowered the intereſt of money, which indeed ſeems to be the natural effect of every ſuch inſtitution, from the increaſed circulation. But if any inſtances more than before have happened of this kind, it may be by perſons in extreme neceſſity applying to others who have credit with the bank, and who have ſo little conſcientious ſcruple as to take advantage of their neighbour's poverty. If this is the caſe, it is only a particular abuſe, or occaſional bad conſequence of a thing otherwiſe good and uſeful. It is not a juſt objection againſt any thing, that it may be or has been in ſome inſtances abuſed. Beſides,

as it is the duty of every banking company to guard againſt this evil as much as poſſible, even by perſonal reſentment, againſt thoſe who make this uſe of their confidence, ſo it is an evil not out of the reach of legal puniſhment or general infamy. Wiſe and well executed laws againſt uſury, would at leaſt ſo far reſtrain it, as to make it an evil of little conſequence.

But in examining the nature and operation of different kinds of paper, I muſt conſider an objection of much greater importance, upon the principles of this diſcourſe, againſt the paper of banks, or at leaſt, a defect in their ſyſtem, that ſeems to call for other meaſures in addition to it. This is, that banking companies give credit only ſo as to be ſerviceable to merchants, and thoſe immediately connected with them, but do not extend it to huſbandmen, or thoſe who improve the ſoil, by taking mortgages for a conſiderable time: yet according to the theory above laid down, this is not only one of the advantages, but perhaps the chief advantage to be derived from a paper circulation of any kind. Now, I admit, that the ſettlement and cultivation of the ſoil is the radical ſource of the proſperity of this country. It is indeed the ſource of the proſperity of every country, but comparatively more ſo of that of this country than moſt others. I alſo admit that credit, properly extended, to induſtrious perſons in this way would be exceedingly beneficial. For this reaſon, and for this alone, Dr Franklin and others perhaps judged right when they ſaid, the country received great benefit from the loan office paper of former times. I am alſo ſenſible, that it

is not practicable nor proper for banking companies to give credit upon mortgages on distant lands. They being bound to prompt payment, must expect the same; therefore they are not to be blamed for refusing it in this form *. For all these reasons, I do not take upon me wholly to condemn a measure in America, which would be unnecessary or improper in Europe. We hear from every quarter, that is to say, from almost every state, a loud cry for paper money. Now when there is a great and universal complaint, it is seldom without some foundation; and though I have taken much pains in the preceding discourse to shew that they mistake their own wants, that they do not want a circulating medium, but use that phrase without understanding its meaning; yet they certainly do want something. They want particular *credit*; and they look back with desire to the former times when they had paper money, which, by its name itself, pointed out its nature and use, the notes being then called bills of credit. I will therefore proceed, keeping a steady eye upon the principles above laid down, to state in what manner a loan office may be established † within moderate bounds, that shall render a

* I must here observe, that the banks of Scotland never gave credit upon mortgages, but personal security only, and yet they were universally supposed to put it in the power of landed men to improve their estates; so that the money transactions must have been, though not directly, yet remotely in their favour.

† I am not ignorant that there has been in one of our states, I mean Pennsylvania, a violent controversy for and

ſervice probably greater than the evils neceſſarily conſequent upon it.

I would therefore propoſe, that any ſtate that thinks it neceſſary, ſhould emit a ſum of ſuppoſe one hundred thouſand pounds, and that the following rules ſhould be laid down in the law, and invariably adhered to. 1. That not a ſhilling of that money ſhould iſſue from the loan-office treaſury, but upon mortgage of land to the amount of double the ſum in value. 2. That it ſhould not be a legal tender for any debts contracted or to be contracted, but receivable in all taxes within the ſtate, and payable for the wages of Council and Aſſembly, and the fees and perquiſites of all public officers, after it has been ſo received. 3. That at the end of twelve calender months, a ſum preciſely equal to the intereſt that had been accrued or become due in that time, ſhould be conſumed by fire, and public intimation given of its being done. The ſame thing ſhould be done every ſubſequent year. 4. That at no time any part of this money ſhould be made uſe of in the payment of the public debts, but that which had been firſt levied in taxes. It would not be proper

against the bank, between the political factions which divide that state. On this account, I am sorry I was obliged to mention banks at all? but it was impossible for me to do justice to the subject, without considering their general nature and effects; and I will not so much as name any of the arguments on either side of this question, but what is necessarily connected with money in general as a currency, and its effects upon the national interest.

even to borrow from the ſtock for this purpoſe by anticipation *.

If theſe rules were obſerved, credit would be given to ſome perſons, who needed and deſerved it, to the amount of the whole ſum. The bills current would be diminiſhed in quantity every year ſo as not to load the circulation, which would have a ſenſible effect upon the public opinion, and indeed, from the nature of the thing, would increaſe their value, or rather confirm it from year to year †. At the end of fourteen or fifteen years they would be wholly taken out of circulation, and that not by any tax laid on for the purpoſe, but by the hire or uſe of the money itſelf, and after all, the principal ſum would be ſtill due to the ſtate in good money, which might bear intereſt for ever. It would be an important addition to this ſcheme, if no bills

* The paying of the public creditors is one of the most common and popular arguments for paper emissions, but to pay them with money not loaned, is not paying, but continuing the debt upon the state, and only make it change hands. All such bills so paid must be accounted for by the public. It is better, therefore, that by the loans men may be enabled easily to pay their taxes; and then let the public creditors be paid by money demanded equally from the whole for that purpose.

† I cannot help observing here, that the titles of most of the acts for emitting money, do unawares confess the justice of all that has been said above; they run thus, "An act for emitting —— thousand pounds in bills of credit, and directing the manner of *sinking the same*." Does not this shew what sort of a circulating medium they are? Does it not admit, that they will do evil if they continue to circulate? When you coin gold and silver, do you provide for sinking it?

leſs than two dollars, or perhaps three, or five, ſhould be emitted, as this would ſtill keep ſilver at leaſt in circulation. On the above principles, all the good that can be produced by paper would be effected, viz. facilitating commerce, and giving credit; and as little of the evil as poſſible, becauſe the quantity would be fixed and moderate at firſt, and continually decreaſing, ſo as at laſt to vaniſh altogether; and then another emiſſion of the ſame kind might be made, if the utility of the firſt ſhould recommend it.

Perhaps it will be ſaid, that this money not being a legal tender, would not anſwer the purpoſe of borrowers by paying their debts, nor get at all into circulation. To this I anſwer, that it would not anſwer the purpoſe of thoſe who want to pay their debts with half nothing and cheat their creditors; nor do I wiſh to ſee any thing attempted that would produce that effect. But I affirm, that it would get better into circulation than by a tender law, which creates general and juſt ſuſpicion. Tender laws, as has been already proved, may be made uſe of by deceitful perſons to do particular acts of injuſtice, but are not ſufficient to procure general circulation, nor to excite and reward induſtry, without the opinion and approbation of the public. Such money as I have deſcribed would excite no alarm, it might eaſily be tried. It ſhould, in my opinion, certainly be tried, for all would know that it would pay every tax to government, and even borrowers of large ſums might make trial of it, without any riſk at all, becauſe, if it would not anſwer their end, they might after a few months, repay it, and take

up their mortgage. But I cannot help thinking, that the principles of it are so juſt, and the plan ſo certain, that all underſtanding perſons would perceive and approve it.

I muſt here take the occaſion and the liberty of ſaying, that it were greatly to be wiſhed that thoſe who have in their hands the adminiſtration of affairs in the ſeveral States of America, would take no meaſures, either on this, or any other ſubject, but what are founded upon juſtice, ſupported by reaſon, and warranted by the experience of former ages, and of other countries. The operation of political cauſes is as uniform and certain as that of natural cauſes. And any meaſure which in itſelf has a bad tendency, though its effects may not be inſtantly diſcernible, and their progreſs may be but ſlow, yet it will be infallible; and perhaps the danger will then only appear when a remedy is impoſſible. This is the caſe, in ſome degree, with all political meaſures, without exception, yet I am miſtaken if it is not eminently ſo with reſpect to commercial dealings. Commerce is excited, directed, and carried on by intereſt. But do not miſtake this, it is not carried on by general univerſal intereſt, nor even by well informed national intereſt, but by immediate, apparent, and ſenſible perſonal intereſt. I muſt alſo obſerve, that there is in mankind a ſharp-ſightedneſs upon this ſubject that is quite aſtoniſhing.

All men are not philoſophers, but they are generally good judges of their own profit in what is immediately before them, and will uniformly adhere to it. It is not uncommon to ſee a man who ap-

pears to be almoſt as ſtupid as a ſtone, and yet he ſhall be as adroit and dexterous in making a bargain, or even more ſo, than a man of the firſt rate underſtanding, who, probably, for that very reaſon, is leſs attentive to trifling circumſtances, and leſs under the government of mean and ſelfiſh views. As to currency, which has been our general ſubject, if coins of any particular ſpecies happen, as is ſometimes the caſe, to paſs at a rate, ever ſo little higher, in one country, or corner of a country, than another, thither they will immediately direct their courſe; and if the matter is not attended to, nor the miſtake rectified, they will be all there in a very ſhort time, and the place which receives them muſt bear the loſs.

I will now ſum up, in ſingle propoſitions, the ſubſtance of what has been aſſerted, and I hope ſufficiently proved, in the preceding diſcourſe.

1. It ought not to be imputed to accident or caprice, that gold, ſilver, and copper, formerly were, and the two firſt continue to be, the medium of commerce; but to their inherent value, joined with other properties, that fit them for circulation. Therefore, all the ſpeculations, formed upon a contrary ſuppoſition, are inconcluſive and abſurd.

2. Gold and ſilver are far from being in too ſmall quantity at preſent for the purpoſe of a circulating medium, in the commercial nations. The laſt of them, viz. ſilver, ſeems rather to be in too great quantity, ſo as to become inconvenient for tranſportation.

3. The people of every nation will get the quantity of theſe precious metals, that they are

entitled to by their induſtry, and no more. If by any accident, as plunder in war, or borrowing from other nations, or even finding it in mines, they get more, they will not be able to keep it. It will in a ſhort time find its level. Laws againſt exporting the coin will not prevent this. Laws of this kind, though they are ſtill in force in ſome nations, ſuppoſed to be wiſe, yet are in themſelves ridiculous. If you import more than you export, you muſt pay the balance, or give up the trade.

4. The quantity of gold and ſilver at any time in a nation, is no evidence of national wealth, unleſs you take into conſideration the way in which it came there, and the probability of its continuing.

5. No paper of any kind is, properly ſpeaking, money. It ought never to be made a legal tender. It *ought* not to be forced upon *any* body, becauſe it *cannot* be forced upon *every* body.

6. Gold and ſilver, fairly acquired, and likely to continue, are real national, as well as perſonal wealth. If twice as much paper circulates with them, though in full credit, particular perſons may be rich by poſſeſſing it, but the nation in general is not.

7. The cry of the ſcarcity of money, is generally putting the effect for the cauſe. No buſineſs can be done, ſay ſome, becauſe money is ſcarce. It may be ſaid with more truth, money is ſcarce, becauſe little buſineſs is done. Yet their influence, like that of many other cauſes and effects, is reciprocal.

8. The quantity of current money, of whatever kind, will have an effect in raiſing the price of in-

duſtry, and bringing goods dearer to market, therefore the increaſe of the currency in any nation by paper, which will not paſs among other nations, makes the firſt coſt of every thing they do greater, and of conſequence the profit leſs.

9. It is however poſſible, that paper obligations may ſo far facilitate commerce, and extend credit, as by the additional induſtry, that they excite, to overbalance the injury which they do in other reſpects. Yet even the good itſelf may be overdone. Too much money may be emitted even upon loan, but to emit money any other way than upon loan, is to do all evil and no good.

10. The exceſſive quantity of paper emitted by the different ſtates of America, will probably be a loſs to the whole. They cannot however take advantage of one another in that way. That ſtate which emits moſt will loſe moſt, and *vice verſa*.

11. I can ſee no way in which it can do good but one, which is to deter other nations from truſting us, and thereby leſſen our importations; and I ſincerely wiſh, that in that way it may prove in ſome degree a remedy for its own evils.

12. Thoſe who refuſe doubtful paper, and thereby diſgrace it, or prevent its circulation, are not enemies, but friends to their country.

To draw to a concluſion, it is probable that thoſe who perceive, which it will be eaſy to do, that the author of this tract is not a merchant or trader, by profeſſion, will be ready to ſay, What has this gentleman to do with ſuch a ſubject? Why ſhould he write upon what he has no practical knowledge of, money and commerce? To theſe I anſwer, that I

have written, not as a merchant, but as a ſcholar. I profeſs to derive my opinions from the beſt civilians of this and the laſt age, and from the hiſtory of all ages, joined with a pretty conſiderable experience and attention to the effects of political cauſes within the ſphere of my own obſervation. It is not even too much to ſay, that one of the mercantile profeſſion, unleſs his views were very enlarged indeed, is not ſo proper to handle a general ſubject of this kind as ſome others. His attention is uſually confined to the buſineſs, and to the branch of that buſineſs in which he is employed. In that his diſcernment will be clear, and he will find out, if poſſible, where he can buy cheapeſt, and ſell dearеſt. But as to the theory of commerce, or the great objects of national intereſt or connection, he can have no advantage at all over a perſon given to ſtudy and reflection, who has ſome acquaintance with public life. With theſe remarks by way of apology, and having no intereſt in the matter but what is common to every citizen, I freely commit the whole to the judgment of the impartial public.

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

PRESENT STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS,

AND

ON THE DUTY AND INTEREST OF AMERICA IN THIS IMPORTANT CRISIS.

THAT the preſent is an important æra to America, has been ſo often repeated, that I ſuppoſe no man doubts it, and I hope few will forget it. Yet, however auguſt the idea, it is capable of being greatly enlarged. It will be an important æra in the hiſtory of mankind. The extent of this country is ſuch, that as it is now, and probably will ſoon be ſettled, it makes no inconſiderable part of the globe itſelf. The European in general, but particularly the Britiſh ſettlements in America, have for theſe hundred years paſt, been exhibiting to the world a ſcene differing in many reſpects from what it ever beheld. In all the ancient emigrations, or colonial ſettlements, the number was ſmall, the territory very limited, and which was ſtill more, the people and the ſoil were almoſt alike uncultivated; and therefore both proceeded to improvement by very ſlow degrees. But in America we ſee a coun-

try almoſt without bounds, new and untouched, taken poſſeſſion of at once by the power, the learning, and the wealth of Europe.

Hence it is that the cultivation and the population of America have advanced with a rapidity next to miraculous, and of which no political calculators have principles or data ſufficient to make a certain judgment. I hold every thing that has been ſaid on the numbers in America to be good for nothing, except in certain places where they have proceeded on actual numeration. When writers ſtate, that the inhabitants in America double themſelves in twenty or twenty-five years, they ſpeak by gueſs, and they ſay nothing. It may be under or over the truth in certain places; but there are others in which they become twenty times the number in ſeven years. I do not know, and therefore will not attempt to conjecture, how faſt mankind may multiply in a country that is in the moſt favourable ſtate poſſible, both in itſelf, and for receiving an acceſſion from others leſs happily circumſtanced. What is more certain, as well as of more importance to obſerve, is, that the Britiſh colonies in North-America, have in this reſpect exceeded every other country upon the face of the earth.

What has cauſed this difference? Does the climate of Britain naturally produce more wiſdom, ſtrength and activity, than that of France, Spain, or Portugal? Surely not, or wo to America itſelf; for the beſt of its colonies are in the climate of theſe very countries. It is therefore without doubt owing to the liberty which pervades the Britiſh conſtitution, and came with the coloniſts to

this part of the earth. Monteſquieu has, with inimitable beauty, ſhewn, that the natural cauſes of population or depopulation, are not half ſo powerful as the moral cauſes; by which laſt he means the ſtate of ſociety, the form of government, and the manners of the people. War, famine, and peſtilence are ſcarcely felt, where there is liberty and equal laws. The wound made by thoſe ſore judgments is ſpeedily cloſed by the vigour of the conſtitution; whereas, in a more ſickly frame, a trifling ſcratch will rankle and produce long diſeaſe, or perhaps terminate in death. We need go no further than our own country to have full proof of the force of liberty. The ſouthern colonies, bleſſed as they are with a ſuperior ſoil and more powerful ſun, are yet greatly inferior to Pennſylvania and New-England, in numbers, ſtrength, and value of land in proportion to its quantity. The matter is eaſily ſolved. The conſtitutions of theſe latter colonies are more favourable to univerſal induſtry.

But with all the differences between one colony and another, America in general, by its gradual improvement, not long ago exhibited a ſpectacle, the moſt delightful that can be conceived, to a benevolent and contemplative mind. A country growing every year in beauty and fertility, the people growing in numbers and wealth, arts, and ſciences, carefully cultivated and conſtantly advancing, and poſſeſſing ſecurity of property by liberty and equal laws, which are the true and proper ſource of all the reſt. While things were in this ſituation, Great-Britain reaped a great, unenvied, and ſtill increaſing profit from the trade of the

colonies. I am neither ſo weak as to believe, nor ſo fooliſh as to affirm, as ſome did in the beginning of this conteſt, that the colony trade was the whole ſupport of a majority of the people in Great Britain. How could any perſon of reflection ſuppoſe that the foreign trade of three millions of people, could be the chief ſupport of eight millions, when the internal trade of theſe eight millions themſelves, is and muſt be the ſupport of double the number that could be ſupported by the trade of America, beſides their trade to every other part o the world? But our trade was ſtill of great importance and value, and yielded to Great Britain yearly a profit vaſtly ſuperior to any thing they could reaſonably hope to draw from taxes and impoſitions although they had been ſubmitted to without complaint.

This however did not ſatisfy the king, miniſtry and parliament of Great Britain. They formed golden, but miſtaken and deluſive hopes of lightening their own burdens by levying taxes from us. They formed various plans, and attempted various meaſures, not the moſt prudent I confeſs, for carrying their purpoſe into effect. The ultimate purpoſe itſelf was in ſome degree covered at firſt, and they hoped to bring it about by ſlow and imperceptible ſteps. In ſome inſtances the impoſition was in itſelf of little conſequence; as appointing the colonies to furniſh ſalt, pepper and vinegar to the troops. But the laudable and jealous ſpirit of liberty was alive and awake, and hardly ſuffered any of them to paſs unobſerved or unreſiſted. Public ſpirited writers took care that it ſhould not

ſleep; and in particular the celebrated Pennſylvania Farmer's Letters were of ſignal ſervice, by furniſh-the lovers of their country with facts, and illuſtrating the rights and privileges which it was their duty to defend.

The laſt attempt made by the miniſtry in the way of art and addreſs, was repealing the act laying duties on paper, glaſs, and painter's colours, and leaving a ſmall duty on tea, attended with ſuch circumſtances, that the tea ſhould come to us no dearer, but perhaps cheaper, than before. This was evidently with deſign that we might be induced to let it paſs, and ſo the claim having once taken place, might be carried in other inſtances to the greateſt height. This manœuvre, however, did not elude the vigilance of a public ſpirited people. The whole colonies declared their reſolution never to receive it.

THOUGHTS

ON

AMERICAN LIBERTY.

THE Congreſs is, properly ſpeaking, the repreſentative of the great body of the people of North America. Their election is for a particular purpoſe, and a particular ſeaſon only; it is quite diſtinct from the aſſemblies of the ſeveral provinces. What will be before them, is quite different from what was or could be in the view of the electors, when the aſſemblies are choſen. Therefore thoſe provinces are wrong, who committed it to the aſſembly as ſuch, to ſend delegates, though in ſome provinces, ſuch as Boſton and Virginia, and ſome others, the unanimity of ſentiment is ſuch, as to make it the ſame thing in effect.

It is at leaſt extremely uncertain, whether it could be proper or ſafe for the Congreſs to ſend, either ambaſſadors, petition or addreſs, directly to king or parliament, or both. They may treat them as a diſorderly, unconſtitutional meeting—they may hold their meeting itſelf to be criminal—they may find ſo many objections in point of legal form, that

it is plainly in the power of thoſe who wiſh to be able to do it, to deaden the zeal of the multitude in the colonies, by ambiguous, dilatory, frivolous anſwers, perhaps ſeverer meaſures. It is certain that this Congreſs is different from any regular exertion, in the accuſtomed forms of a quiet, approved, ſettled conſtitution. It is an interruptio n or ſuſpenſion of the uſual forms, and an appeal to the great law of reaſon, the firſt principles of the ſocial union, and the multitude collectively, for whoſe benefit all the particular laws and cuſtoms of a conſtituted ſtate, are ſuppoſed to have been originally eſtabliſhed.

There is not the leaſt reaſon, as yet, to think that either the king, the parliament, or even the people of Great Britain, have been able to enter into the great principles of univerſal liberty, or are willing to hear the diſcuſſion of the point of right, without prejudice. They have not only taken no pains to convince us that ſubmiſſion to their claim is conſiſtent with liberty among us, but it is doubtful whether they expect or deſire we ſhould be convinced of it. It ſeems rather that they mean to force us to be abſolute ſlaves, knowing ourſelves to be ſuch by the hard law of neceſſity. If this is not their meaning, and they wiſh us to believe that our properties and lives are quite ſafe in the abſolute diſpoſal of the Britiſh Parliament, the late acts with reſpect to Boſton, to ruin their capital, deſtroy their charter, and grant the ſoldiers a licence to murder them, are certainly arguments of a very ſingular nature.

Therefore it follows, that the great object of the

approaching Congreſs ſhould be to unite the colonies, and make them as one body, in any meaſure of ſelf-defence, to aſſure the people of Great Britain that we will not ſubmit voluntarily, and convince them that it would be either impoſſible or unprofitable for them to compel us by open violence.

For this purpoſe, the following reſolutions and recommendations are ſubmitted to their conſideration :—

1. To profeſs as all the provincial and county rulers have done, our loyalty to the king, and our backwardneſs to break our connection with Great Britain, if we are not forced by their unjuſt impoſitions. Here it may not be improper to compare our paſt conduct with that of Great Britain itſelf, and perhaps explicitly to profeſs our deteſtation of the virulent and inſolent abuſe of his majeſty's perſon and family, which ſo many have been guilty of in that iſland.

2. To declare, not only that we eſteem the claim of the Britiſh Parliament to be illegal and unconſtitutional, but that we are firmly determined never to ſubmit to it, and do deliberately prefer war with all its horrors, and even extermination itſelf, to ſlavery rivetted on us and our poſterity.

3. To reſolve that we will adhere to the intereſt of the whole body, and that no colony ſhall make its ſeparate peace, or from the hope of partial diſtinction, leave others as the victims of miniſterial vengeance, but that we will continue united, and purſue the ſame meaſures, till American liberty is ſettled on a ſolid baſis, and in particular, till the

now ſuffering colony of Maſſachuſetts Bay is reſtored to all the rights of which it has been, on this occaſion, unjuſtly deprived.

4. That a non-importation agreement, which has been too long delayed, ſhould be entered into immediately, and at the ſame time, a general non-conſumptive agreement, as to all Britiſh goods at leaſt, ſhould be circulated univerſally through the country, and take place immediately, that thoſe who have retarded the non-importation agreement, may not make a profit to themſelves by this injury to their country.

5. That ſome of the moſt effectual meaſures ſhould be taken to promote, not only induſtry in general, but manufactures in particular; ſuch as granting premiums in different colonies for manufactures which can be produced in them; appointing public markets for all the materials of manufacture; inviting over and encouraging able manufacturers in every branch; and appointing ſocieties in every great city, eſpecially in principal ſea-ports, to receive ſubſcriptions for directing and encouraging emigrants who ſhall come over from Europe, whether manufacturers or labourers, and publiſhing propoſals for this purpoſe, in the Britiſh newſpapers.

6. That it be recommended to the legiſlature of every colony, to put their militia upon the beſt footing; and to all Americans to provide themſelves with arms, in caſe of a war with the Indians, French or Roman Catholics, or in caſe they ſhould be reduced to the hard neceſſity of defending themſelves from murder and aſſaſſination.

7. That a committee ſhould be appointed to draw up an earneſt and affectionate addreſs to the army and navy, putting them in mind of their character as Britons, the reproach which they will bring upon themſelves, and the danger to which they will be expoſed, if they allow themſelves to be the inſtruments of enſlaving their country.

8. That a plan of union ſhould be laid down for all the colonies, ſo that, as formerly, they may correſpond and aſcertain how they ſhall effectually cooperate in ſuch meaſures as ſhall be neceſſary to their common defence. — — —

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ON THE

CONTROVERSY

ABOUT

INDEPENDENCE.

SIR,

I BEG leave by your assistance, to publish a few thoughts upon the manner of conducting, what I think is now called the independent controversy, in which this country in general is so greatly interested. Every one knows that when the claims of the British Parliament were openly made, and violently enforced, the most precise and determined resolutions were entered into, and published by every colony, every county, and almost every township or smaller district, that they would not submit to them. This was clearly expressed in the greatest part of them, and ought to be understood as the implied sense of them all, not only that they would not *soon* or *easily*, but that they would *never*, on *any event*, submit to them. For my own part, I confess, I never would have signed these resolves at first, nor taken up arms in consequence of them afterwards, if I had not been fully

convinced, as I am ſtill, that acquieſcence in this uſurped power, would be followed by the total and abſolute ruin of the colonies. They would have been no better than tributry ſtates to a kingdom at a great diſtance from them. They would have been therefore, as has been the caſe with all ſtates in a ſimilar ſituation from the begining of the world, the ſervants of ſervants from generation to generation. For this reaſon I declare it to have been my meaning, and I know it was the meaning of thouſands more, that though we earneſtly wiſhed for reconciliation with ſafety to our liberties, yet we did deliberately prefer, not only the horrors of a civil war, not only the danger of anarchy, and the uncertainty of a new ſettlement, but even extermination itſelf, to ſlavery, rivetted on us and our poſterity.

The moſt peaceable means were firſt uſed; but no relaxation could be obtained: one arbitrary and oppreſſive act followed after another; they deſtroyed the property of a whole capital—ſubverted to its very foundation, the conſtitution and government of a whole colony, and granted the ſoldiers a liberty of *murdering* in all the colonies. I expreſs it thus, becauſe they were not to be called to account for it where it was committed, which every body muſt allow was a temporary, and undoubtedly, in ninety-nine caſes of an hundred, muſt have iſſued in a total impunity. There is one circumſtance however in my opinion, much more curious than all the reſt. The reader will ſay, What can this be? It is the following, which I beg may be particularly attended to:—While all this was a doing, the king in his ſpeeches, the parliament in their acts, and the

people of Great Britain in their addreſſes, never failed to extol their own lenity. I do not infer from this, that the king, parliament and people of Great Britain are all barbarians and ſavages—the inference is unneceſſary and unjuſt: But I infer the miſery of the people of America, if they muſt ſubmit *in all caſes whatſoever*, to the deciſions of a body of the ſons of Adam, ſo diſtant from them, and who have an intereſt in oppreſſing them. It has been my opinion from the begining, that we did not carry our reaſoning fully home, when we complained of an arbitrary prince, or of the inſolence, cruelty and obſtinacy of Lord North, Lord Bute, or Lord Mansfield. What we have to fear, and what we have now to grapple with, is the ignorance, prejudice, partiality and injuſtice of human nature. Neither king nor miniſtry, could have done, nor durſt have attempted what we have ſeen, if they had not had the nation on their ſide. The friends of America in England are few in number, and contemptible in influence; nor muſt I omit, that even of theſe few, not one, till very lately, ever reaſoned the American cauſe upon its proper principles, or viewed it in its proper light.

Petitions on petitions have been preſented to king and parliament, and an addreſs ſent to the people of Great Britain, which have not merely been fruitleſs, but treated with the higheſt degree of diſdain. The conduct of the Britiſh miniſtry during the whole of this conteſt, as has been often obſerved, has been ſuch, as to irritate the whole people of this continent to the higheſt degree, and unite them together by the firm bond of neceſſity

and common intereſt. In this reſpect they have ſerved us in the moſt eſſential manner. I am firmly perſuaded, that had the wiſeſt heads in America met together to contrive what meaſures the miniſtry ſhould follow to ſtrengthen the American oppoſition and defeat their own deſigns, they could not have fallen upon a plan ſo effectual, as that which has been ſteadily purſued. One inſtance I cannot help mentioning, becauſe it was both of more importance, and leſs to be expected than any other. When a majority of the New-York Aſſembly, to their eternal infamy, attempted to break the union of the colonies, by refuſing to approve the proceedings of the Congreſs, and applying to Parliament by ſeparate petition—becauſe they preſumed to make mention of the principal grievance of taxation, it was treated with ineffable contempt. I deſire it may be obſerved, that all thoſe who are called the friends of America in Parliament, pleaded ſtrongly for receiving the New-York petition; which plainly ſhewed, that neither the one nor the other underſtood the ſtate of affairs in America. Had the miniſtry been prudent, or the oppoſition ſucceſsful, we had been ruined; but with what tranſport did every friend to American liberty hear, that theſe traitors to the common cauſe had met with the reception which they deſerved.

Nothing is more manifeſt, than that the people of Great Britain, and even the king and miniſtry, have been hitherto exceedingly ignorant of the ſtate of things in America. For this reaſon, their meaſures have been ridiculous in the higheſt degree, and the iſſue diſgraceful. There are ſome who

will not believe that they are ignorant—they tell us, how can this be? Have they not multitudes in this country who gave them intelligence from the beginning? Yes they have; but they would truſt none but what they called official intelligence, that is to ſay, from obſequious, intereſted tools of government; many of them knew little of the true ſtate of things themſelves, and when they did, would not tell it, leſt it ſhould be diſagreeable. I have not a very high opinion of the integrity and candour of Dr C———, Dr C———, and other mercenary writers in New-York; yet I firmly believe, that they thought the friends of American liberty much more inconſiderable, both for weight and numbers, than they were. They converſed with few but thoſe of their own way of thinking, and according to the common deception of little minds, miſtook the ſentiments prevailing within the circle of their own acquaintance, for the judgment of the public. — — —

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ON

CONDUCTING

THE

AMERICAN CONTROVERSY.

SIR,

I TAKE the liberty, by means of your free and uninfluenced preſs, of communicating to the public a few remarks upon the manner of conducting the American controverſy in general, and on ſome of the writers that have appeared in your paper in particular. That you may not paſs ſentence upon me immediately as an enemy to the royal authority, and a ſon of ſedition, I declare that I eſteem his majeſty king George the third to have the only rightful and lawful title to the Britiſh crown, which was ſettled upon his family in conſequence of the glorious revolution. You will ſay, this is nothing at all; it is the creed of the factious Boſtonians. I will then go a little further, and ſay, that I not only revere him as the firſt magiſtrate of the realm, but I love and honour him as a man, and am perſuaded that he wiſhes the proſperity and happineſs of his people in every part of his dominions. Nay, I

have ſtill more to ſay, I do not think the Britiſh miniſtry themſelves have deſerved all the abuſe and foul names that have been beſtowed on them by political writers. The ſteps which they have taken with reſpect to American affairs, and which I eſteem to be unjuſt, impolitic, and barbarous to the higheſt degree, have been chiefly owing to the two following cauſes. 1. Ignorance or miſtake, occaſioned by the miſinformation of intereſted and treacherous perſons employed in their ſervice. 2. The prejudices common to them, with perſons of all ranks in the iſland of Great Britain.

Of the firſt of theſe, I ſhall ſay nothing at preſent, becauſe perhaps it may occur with as great propriety afterwards. But as to the ſecond, there is to be found in the newſpapers enough to convince every man of reflection, that it was not the king and the miniſtry only, but the whole nation that was enraged againſt America. The tide is but juſt beginning to turn; and I am in ſome doubt whether it has fairly turned yet, upon any larger principles than a regard to their own intereſt, which may be affected by our proceedings. It can hardly be expected, that the eyes of a whole nation ſhould be at once opened upon the generous principles of univerſal liberty. It is natural for the multitude in Britain, who have been from their infancy taught to look upon an act of parliament as ſupreme and irreſiſtible, and to conſider the liberty of their country itſelf as conſiſting in the dominion of the houſe of commons, to be ſurpriſed and aſtoniſhed at any ſociety or body of men, calling in queſtion the authority of parliament, and denying

its power over them. It certainly required time to make them ſenſible that things are in ſuch a ſituation in America, that for the houſe of commons in Great Britain to aſſume the uncontrouled power of impoſing taxes upon American property, would be as inconſiſtent with the ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution, as it appears at firſt ſight agreeable to its form. It argues great ignorance of human nature to ſuppoſe, that becauſe we ſee a thing clearly, which we contemplate every day, and which it is our intereſt to believe and maintain, therefore they are deſtitute of honour and truth who do not acknowledge it immediately, though all their former ideas and habits have led them to a contrary ſuppoſition. A man will become an American by reſiding in the country three months, with a proſpect of continuing, more eaſily and certainly than by reading or hearing of it for three years, amidſt the ſophiſtry of daily diſputation.

For theſe reaſons, I have often been grieved to ſee that the pleaders for American liberty, have mixed ſo much of abuſe and invective againſt the miniſtry in general, as well as particular perſons, with their reaſonings in ſupport of their own moſt righteous claim. I have often ſaid to friends of America, on that ſubject, it is not the king and miniſtry, ſo much as the prejudices of Britons, with which you have to contend. Spare no pains to have them fully informed. Add to the immoveable firmneſs with which you juſtly ſupport your own rights, a continual ſolicitude to convince the people of Britain, that it is not paſſion but reaſon that inſpires you. Tell them it cannot be

ambition, but neceſſity, that makes you run an evident riſk of the heavieſt ſufferings, rather than forfeit for yourſelves and your poſterity, the greateſt of all earthly bleſſings.

Another circumſtance gave me ſtill more uneaſineſs, *viz.* that many American patriots ſeemed to countenance, and to think themſelves intereſted in the proſperity of that moſt deſpicable of all factions that ever exiſted in the Britiſh empire, headed by the celebrated John Wilkes, Eſq. That ſhameleſs gang carried on their attacks with ſuch groſs, and indecent, and groundleſs abuſe of the king and his family, that they became odious to the nation, and indeed ſo contemptible, that the miniſtry ſent at one time the lord mayor of London to the tower, without exciting the leaſt reſentment in the perſons of property in that great city, ſo as to be felt in the operations of the treaſury.

I am ſenſible, and I mention it with pleaſure, that no American ever proceeded to ſuch offenſive extravagance on theſe ſubjects, as the people in Britain. Far greater inſults were offered to the ſovereign, within the city of London, and within the verge of the court, than ever were thought of, or would have been permitted, by the mob in any part of America. Even the writings containing illiberal abuſe from England, were ſcarcely ſought after here, and many of them never publiſhed, although it could have been done without the leaſt danger of a proſecution. Yet, though the people of America are as dutiful and reſpectful ſubjects to the king as any in his dominions, there were ſome things done, and ſome things publiſhed,

that ſeemed to intimate that we had one and the ſame cauſe with the author of the North Britain, No. 45. The evil conſequence of this was, that it had a tendency to lead the king and miniſtry to think that the American claim was no better than the Wilkite clamour, and ſo to oppoſe it with the ſame firmneſs, and to treat it with the ſame diſdain. Nothing could be more injudicious than this conduct in the Americans; and it aroſe from the moſt abſolute ignorance of political hiſtory. The ſtamp-act, that firſt-born of American oppreſſions, was framed by the chief men of that very faction; and it is plain from their language to this hour, that they make no other uſe of American diſturbances, but as engines of oppoſition, and to ſerve the mean purpoſes of party or of family intereſt.

I do not mean by this to take any part with or againſt the preſent miniſtry. I have ſeen many changes of the miniſtry, without any ſenſible change of the ſtate of public affairs. Nothing is more common with them than to raiſe a hideous outcry againſt a meaſure, when they are out, and yet, without ſhame or conſcience, do the very ſame thing as ſoon as they get in. I look upon the cauſe of America at preſent to be a matter of truly inexpreſſible moment. The ſtate of the human race through a great part of the globe, for ages to come, depends upon it. Any miniſter or miniſtry, who is in or out of court-favour, at a particular juncture, is ſo little a matter, that it ſhould not be named with it.

ARISTIDES.

SIR,

I HAVE a few thoughts to communicate, firſt to yourſelf, and after that, if you pleaſe, to the public, upon the manner of conducting what is now called the independent controverſy, in the newſpapers. There are to be found in the tracts upon one ſide of this queſtion, almoſt without exception, complaints of ſome reſtraints, felt or feared, upon the freedom of the preſs. I ſhall be glad to be informed, becauſe I am yet ignorant, what foundation there is for theſe complaints. A pamphlet was publiſhed ſometime ago, calling itſelf Common Senſe, which nobody was obliged to read, but thoſe who were willing to pay for it, and that pretty dearly too. It was however read very generally, which I ſuppoſe muſt have ariſen either from the beauty and elegance of the compoſition, or from the truth and importance of the matter contained in it. That it did not ariſe from the firſt of theſe cauſes, I ſhall take for granted, until I meet with ſomebody who is of a different opinion; and when this is added to the circumſtance of its being ſold in the manner above mentioned, it is plain that the ſubject matter of Common Senſe was propoſed to the world under every diſadvantage, but that of its own manifeſt importance and apparent truth or probability.

Things being in this ſituation, after time ſufficient to have matured any pamphlet of an ordinary ſize, out comes an anſwer to *Common Senſe*, under the title of *Plain Truth*. This, in one reſpect, was perfectly fair, for it was pamphlet againſt pamphlet; and the ſaid Plain Truth alſo was ſold, as well as Common Senſe, at a very high price. For this laſt circumſtance, there was no need for aſſigning a reaſon, becauſe I apprehend it is the undoubted right of every author, to ſet what price he pleaſes upon the productions of his genius, and of every printer upon the productions of his preſs, leaving it always to the public to determine whether they will purchaſe theſe productions at that price, or any other. A reaſon however was aſſigned, which was as ſingular as it was unneceſſary. We were told that only a ſmall number of copies was printed of the *firſt* edition, I believe this is the only inſtance that can be produced, of calling a book in its publication, the firſt edition. The only reaſon of making more editions than one of any book, is the ſpeedy ſale of that number of copies, which the modeſty of the author, or the prudence of the bookſeller, thought might be ſufficient for the public demand. In this caſe, there is what is ſtated by the printers a *call* for another edition. But there are multitudes of publications, as to which this call is never heard, and therefore none of them can, with propriety of ſpeech be ſtyled the firſt edition. How would it ſound if I ſhould ſay, that a man who came alone into my houſe, was the firſt of the company that entered; or that my wife, who is ſtill alive and well, is my firſt wife, when it is very poſſible that

ſhe may live till I am unfit for any other wife, or till ſhe is at liberty to take a ſecond huſband?

But further, ſuppoſing that the author and bookſeller had been right in that expectation, which the uſe of the phraſe plainly ſhews the vanity of the one and the miſtake of the other had raiſed in them, I deſire to know how that was a reaſon for printing few copies, and thus rendering them unconſcionably dear. You printers know beſt, but I take it for granted from the nature of the thing, that you print feweſt copies of a book, when you do not expect a general ſale. If I were certain that this diſſertation of mine would cauſe an unuſual demand for the paper that contains it, I would modeſtly ſuggeſt to you, to print three or four hundred of that number more than common. In like manner, if it was certain at the appearance of this pamphlet, that it would be the firſt of many editions, following one another in rapid ſucceſſion, it ſeems the moſt obvious thing in the world that the edition ſhould have been as large as poſſible. Upon the whole, this was an unlucky ſtumble at the threſhold in the author of Plain Truth, as well as an unexpected *lapſus* of the great, illuſtrious, and exalted R. B. Providore, as he calls himſelf, to the ſentimentaliſts, for which I find no way of accounting, but that they were inadvertently led by the ſubject they had in hand to act, as well as write, in direct oppoſition to Common Senſe.

Well, the book comes out, of which I had a preſent of two copies, from different perſons, notwithſtanding the ſmallneſs of the number printed. But what ſhall I ſay, either of the ſtyle or reaſoning of

the performance. The reading of three pages gave me the opinion of it, which all who read it afterwards concurred in, and which all who have not read it eaſily acquieſced in. In execution it was ſo contemptible, that it could not procure a reading on a ſubject, as to which, the curioſity of the public was raiſed to the greateſt height; it not only wanted good qualities in point of taſte and propriety, but was eminently poſſeſſed of every bad one. Common Senſe ſometimes failed in grammar, but never in perſpicuity. Plain Truth was ſo ridiculouſly ornamented with vapid, ſenſeleſs phraſes, and feeble epithets, that his meaning could hardly be comprehended. He often put me in mind of the painted windows of ſome old gothic buildings, which keep out the light. If Common Senſe in ſome places wanted poliſh, Plain Truth was covered over, from head to foot, with a deteſtable and ſtinking varniſh.

As to the argument itſelf, although nothing could be more clearly ſtated than it was in Common Senſe, yet in Plain Truth it was never touched upon in the leaſt degree. The author of Common Senſe did not write his book to ſhew that we ought to reſiſt the unconſtitutional claims of Great Britain, which we had all determined to do long before; he wrote it to ſhew that we ought not to ſeek or wait for a reconciliation, which in his opinion, is now become both impracticable and unprofitable, but to eſtabliſh a fixed regular government, and provide for ourſelves.—Plain Truth, on the contrary, never attempts to ſhew that there is the leaſt probability of obtaining reconciliation on ſuch terms as will preſerve and ſecure our liberties, but has exerted all

his little force, to prove, that such is the strength of Great Britain, that it will be in vain for us to resist at all. I will refer it to the impartial judgment of all who have read this treatise, whether the just and proper inference from his reasoning is not, that we ought immediately to send an embassy with ropes about their necks, to make a full and humble surrender of ourselves and all our property to the dispofal of the parent state. This they have formally and explicitly demanded of us, and this we have with equal clearness determined we will never do. The question then is; Shall we make resistance with the greatest force, as rebel subjects of a government which we acknowledge, or as independent states against an usurped power which we detest and abhor?

After this reprobated author was off the stage, a new set of antagonists appeared against Common Sense; but instead of publishing the first edition of pamphlets, they chose to appear in the newspapers. The propriety of this I beg leave to examine. Much has been said about the liberty of the press; suffer me to say a few words for the liberty of readers. When a pamphlet is published and sold, nobody is wronged. When the answer to it is published and sold, the thing is quite fair. The writers and their cause will undergo an impartial trial; but when the answering one pamphlet by another, has so shamefully failed, to undertake the same thing by various detached pieces in the newspapers, is cramming the sense or nonsense of these authors down our throats, whether we will or not. I pay for your newspaper, and for two more,

and frequently read others beſides. Now, if I pay for news, muſt my paper be ſtuffed with diſſertations, and muſt I read them four or five times over? I do declare, that I have paid, and am to pay, three times for the moſt part of Cato's letters, and if they were to be publiſhed in a pamphlet, I would not give a ruſh for them altogether. But it will be ſaid, the cuſtom is old and univerſal, to write diſſertations in newſpapers. I anſwer, it is both old, univerſal, and uſeful, when under proper direction; but it may be abuſed. It is the right of every publiſher of a newſpaper to inſert in it upon his own judgment and choice, when news are ſcarce, whatever he thinks will recommend his paper to his readers. In this view, an able writer is a treaſure to a publiſher of any periodical paper, and ought certainly to be paid liberally, either in money or thanks, or both; and therefore, Sir, if you have paid for, or even ſolicited from the author, the papers you have publiſhed, you are wholly acquitted of blame, further than ſometimes a miſtaken choice; but if, on the contrary, which I ſtrongly ſuſpect, you and others are paid for inſerting political pieces, I affirm, you take money to deceive your readers.

As the ſubject is of ſome importance, eſpecially at this time, I ſhall take the liberty of ſtating the objections I have againſt the practice, as above deſcribed, leaving you to ſhape your future courſe as you think proper, and determining to uſe my prerogative of taking or giving up your paper as it ſeems to deſerve. In the *firſt* place, if you admit pieces into your paper for pay, I preſume from the

nature of all mankind, that thoſe who pay beſt, will have the preference. Then ſhall we have a new ſtandard of literary merit; and a man who is able and willing to refute pernicious principles, or to detect the falſehood of impudent aſſertions, may yet be too poor to obtain a place, where only it can be done to any good purpoſes. The moment it is in the power of perſons unknown, to conduct or bias the public channels of intelligence, both the people in general, and particular perſons, may be deceived and abuſed in the groſſeſt manner. It is ſcarce worth while, when things of ſo much greater moment are to be added, yet I will juſt mention, that you force nonſenſe upon us which could not make its appearance in any other mode of publication. Pray, Sir, how much copy money would you have given for a pamphlet in which you had found that ridiculous pun upon Mount Seir, which is to be ſeen in one of Cato's letters, and the wretched parody upon Hamlet's ſoliloquy? Parody in general, is one of the loweſt kind of writing that has yet found a name; and that poor ſpeech has been repeated, imitated, and mangled ſo often, that it muſt excite diſguſt in every perſon who has any acquaintance with newſpapers and pamphlets to ſee it again. I could eaſily mention twenty different ways, in which I have ſeen that ſpeech parodied. To ſpeak, or not to ſpeak, that is the queſtion—To fight, or not to fight, that is the queſtion—To wed, or not to wed, that is the queſtion—To drink, or not to drink, that is the queſtion, *&c. &c. &c.* Is this then a time for filling the newſpapers with ſuch egregious trifling?

But this is not all; I could mention a case that happened a few years ago in New York. A gentleman had published a small piece by itself, and put his own name and description on the title page; he was immediately attacked in the most virulent and unmannerly style, by anonymous writers in the newspapers, and it was with the utmost difficulty, that even for pay itself, his friends could get a few words inserted by way of reply. This practice, indeed, is liable to the highest degree of corruption. Whether are we to suppose it was pay or profaneness, that introduced into the paper printed by the infamous R———, pieces containing the grossest obscenity, and which ought to have been punished by the magistrates of the place, as a public nuisance? It is also generally believed of that printer, that he encouraged or hired worthless persons to publish aspersions against a gentleman in the neighbourhood, of good estate, but of no great judgment, that he might squeeze money out of him for the liberty of contradicting them. I do not say that things are come this length with you; but the practice leads to it, and therefore should be early and vigorously opposed.

For the above reasons, caution is to be used in admitting essays into the newspapers at any rate, or suffering a controversy in which people are greatly interested, to be agitated there at all. The writers are very apt to become personal and abusive, and to forget the subject by refuting or exposing every thing that has been thrown out by their antagonists. Certainly, however, they ought to confine themselves to the pieces that have been origi-

nally publiſhed in the newſpapers, and are ſuppoſed to have been read by the ſame perſons who read the anſwers. To anſwer a whole book by a ſeries of letters in the newſpapers, is like attacking a man behind his back, and ſpeaking to his prejudice before perſons who never ſaw nor heard of him, nor are ever likely ſo to do. Common Senſe has been read by many, yet the newſpapers are read by many more; and therefore I affirm, that permitting his adverſaries to attack him there, is giving them an undue advantage over him, and laying the public at the mercy of thoſe who will not ſtick to aſſert any thing whatever in ſupport of a bad cauſe.

Let no body ſay I am writing againſt the freedom of the preſs. I deſire that it ſhould be perfectly free from every bias; but I would have all writings of conſequence upon ſuch a cauſe as this, publiſhed by themſelves, that they may ſtand or fall by their own merit, and the judgment of the public. How do you think, Sir, the letter of the *common man* publiſhed in your paper, ſome time ago, would do if lengthened out a little, and printed in a pamphlet? Under a thin and ſilly pretence of impartiality, he takes upon him to tell us what a number of things muſt be all previouſly ſettled, before we proceed to fix upon a regular plan of government; ſuch as, what price we muſt expect for our produce at this and the other nation and port. Shall we call this reaſoning? Are our underſtandings to be inſulted? If all or any ſuch things muſt be previouſly ſettled, any man of common invention may enumerate fifty thouſand perfectly ſimilar, which will never be ſettled by previous computation

till the end of the world, but will ſpeedily ſettle themſelves by common intereſt, when a trade is open, and the *common man* ſhall never know any thing of the matter.

But what I chiefly complain of, is the tedious, trifling, indecent altercation, occaſioned by handling this ſubject in the newſpapers. It certainly requires a ſpeedy deciſion, as well as mature deliberation; yet muſt we wait till Cato and other writers have exhauſted their invention in the newſpapers, from week to week, gueſſed at one another's perſons, and triumphantly expreſſed their diſdain at each other's ſentiments or ſtyle. If Cato's letters had been a pamphlet, I could have read all that he has ſaid in an hour, and all the reaſoning part by itſelf, in the fourth part of the time; yet after eight letters, muſt we wait ſome weeks more, for it would be indecent to proceed to action before he has done ſpeaking. But after all, the worſt of it is, that in this way of letter and anſwer, we never come to the argument at all. If I miſtake not, the points to be diſcuſſed are very plain and not numerous, and yet wholly untouched, at leaſt by Cato, though he has been repeatedly called upon by his adverſaries. For example—Is there a probable proſpect of reconciliation on conſtitutional principles? What are theſe conſtitutional principles? Will any body ſhew that Great Britain can be ſufficiently ſure of our dependence, and yet we ſure of our liberties? A treatiſe upon this laſt ſubject would be highly acceptable to me, and if well executed, uſeful to all. I ſhall add but one queſtion more. Will the country be as orderly and

happy, and our efforts for reſiſtance as effectual, by the preſent rules and temporary proceedings, as when the whole are united by a firm confederacy, and their exertions concentrated like the ſtrength of a ſingle ſtate? I am greatly miſtaken if theſe points ought not to be the hinge of the controverſy, and yet if they have been examined fully, or the greateſt part of them even touched upon by Cato or his coadjutors, I have read their works with very little attention.

Now, Sir, this paper goes to you, that if you pleaſe you may inſert it, but neither money nor promiſe of good deed to make way for it, ſo that its fate is wholly uncertain.

I remain, Sir,

Yours, *&c.*

ARISTIDES.

PART

OF A

SPEECH IN CONGRESS,

ON THE

CONFERENCE

PROPOSED BY

LORD HOWE.

MR PRESIDENT,

THE ſubject we are now upon, is felt and confeſſed by us all to be of the utmoſt conſequence, and perhaps I may alſo ſay, of delicacy and difficulty. I have not been accuſtomed in ſuch caſes to make ſolemn profeſſions of impartiality, and ſhall not do it now, becauſe I will not ſuppoſe that there are any ſuſpicions to the contrary in the minds of thoſe who hear me. Beſides the variety of opinions that have been formed and delivered upon it, ſeem to prove that we are giving our own proper judgment, without prejudice or influence; which I hope will lead to the diſcovery of what is moſt wiſe and expedient upon the whole.

As the deliberation ariſes from a meſſage ſent to us by Lord Howe, at leaſt by his permiſſion, I

think it is of importance to attend with greater exactneſs to all the circumſtances of that meſſage, than has been done by any gentleman who has yet ſpoken on the ſubject. It comes from the commander in chief of the forces of the king of Great Britain, and one who is ſaid to carry a commiſſion to give peace to America.

From the conduct of the miniſtry at home, from the acts of parliament, and from Lord Howe's proclamation in conformity to both, it is plain, that abſolute unconditional ſubmiſſion is what they require us to agree to, or mean to force us to. And from the moſt authentic private intelligence, the king has not laid aſide his perſonal rancour; it is rather increaſing every day. In theſe circumſtances, Lord Howe has evidently a great deſire to engage us in a treaty; and yet he has conſtantly avoided giving up the leaſt punctilio on his ſide. He could never be induced to give General Waſhington his title. He plainly tells us he cannot treat with Congreſs as ſuch; but he has allowed a priſoner of war to come and tell us he would be glad to ſee us as private gentlemen.

It has been ſaid that this is no inſult or diſgrace to the Congreſs; that the point of honour is hard to be got over, in making the firſt advances. This, Sir, is miſtaking the matter wholly. He has got over this point of honour; he has made the firſt overtures; he has told General Waſhington, by Colonel Putnam, that he wiſhed that meſſage to be conſidered as making the firſt ſtep. His renewed attempts by Lord Drummond, and now by General Sullivan, point

out to all the world that he has made the firſt ſtep. It will doubtleſs be related at home, and I am of opinion it is already written and boaſted of to the miniſtry at home, that he has taken ſuch a part. Therefore, any evil or condeſcenſion that can attend ſeeking peace firſt, has been ſubmitted to by him. Yet has he uniformly avoided any circumſtance that can imply that we are any thing elſe but ſubjects of the king of Great Britain, in rebellion. Such a meſſage as this, if in any degree intended as reſpectful to us, ought to have been ſecret; yet has it been open as the day. In ſhort, ſuch a meſſage was unneceſſary; for if he meant only to communicate his mind to the Congreſs by private gentlemen, he might have done that many ways, and it needed not to have been known either to the public or the Congreſs, till theſe private gentlemen came here on purpoſe to reveal it.—Theſe, then, are the circumſtances which attend this meſſage as it is now before us; and the queſtion is, ſhall we comply with it in any degree, or not? Let us aſk what benefit will be derived from it? There is none yet ſhewn to be poſſible. It has been admitted by every perſon without exception who has ſpoken, that we are not to admit a thought of giving up the independence we have ſo lately declared: and by the greateſt part, if not the whole, that there is not the leaſt reaſon to expect that any correſpondence we can have with him will tend to peace. Yet I think, in the beginning of the debate, ſuch reaſonings were uſed as ſeemed to me only to conclude that we ſhould graſp at it as a means of peace. We were told that it was eaſy for us to boaſt or

be valiant here; but that our armies were running away before their enemies. I never loved boasting, neither here nor any where else. I look upon it as almost a certain forerunner of disgrace. I found my hope of success in this cause, not in the valour of Americans, or the cowardice of Britons, but upon the justice of the cause, and still more upon the nature of things. Britain has first injured and inflamed America to the highest degree; and now attempts, at the distance of three thousand miles, to carry on war with this whole country, and force it to absolute submission. If we take the whole events of the war since it commenced, we shall rather wonder at the uniformity of our successes, than be surprised at some cross events. We have seen bravery as well as cowardice in this country; and there are no consequences of either that are probable, that can be worth mentioning as ascertaining the event of the contest.

Lord Howe speaks of a decisive blow not being yet struck; as if this cause depended upon one battle, which could not be avoided. Sir, this is a prodigious mistake. We may fight no battle at all for a long time, or we may lose some battles, as was the case with the British themselves in the Scotch rebellion of 1745, and the cause notwithstanding be the same. I wish it were considered, that neither loss nor disgrace worth mentioning, has befallen us in the late engagement, nor comparable to what the British troops have often suffered. At the battle of Preston, Sir, they broke to pieces, and ran away like sheep, before a few highlanders. I myself saw them do the same thing at Falkirk, with

very little difference, a ſmall part only of the army making a ſtand, and in a few hours the whole retreating with precipitation before their enemies. Did that make any difference in the cauſe? Not in the leaſt—ſo long as the body of the nation were determined, on principle, againſt the rebels. Nor would it have made any other difference, but in time, though they had got poſſeſſion of London, which they might have eaſily done if they had underſtood their buſineſs; for the militia in England there gathered together, behaved fifty times worſe than that of America has done lately. They generally diſbanded and ran off wholly as ſoon as the rebels came within ten or twenty miles of them. In ſhort, Sir, from any thing that has happened, I ſee not the leaſt reaſon for our attending to this deluſive meſſage. On the contrary, I think it is the very worſt time that could be choſen for us; as it will be looked upon as the effect of fear, and diffuſe the ſame ſpirit, in ſome degree, through different ranks of men.

The improbability of any thing ariſing from this conference, leading to a juſt and honourable peace, might be ſhewn by arguments too numerous to be even ſo much as named. But what I ſhall only mention is, that we are abſolutely certain, from every circumſtance, from all the proceedings at home, and Lord Howe's own explicit declaration in his letter to Dr Franklin, that he never will acknowledge the independence of the American States.

I obſerved that one or two members ſaid, in objection to the report of the board of war, that it

was like a begging of the queſtion, and making a preliminary of the whole ſubject in debate. Alas, Sir, this is a prodigious miſtake. It was not only not the whole, but it was properly no ſubject of debate at all, till within theſe three months. We were contending for the reſtoration of certain privileges under the government of Great Britain, and we were praying for re-union with her. But in the beginning of July, with the univerſal approbation of all the ſtates now united, we renounced this connection, and declared ourſelves free and independent. Shall we bring this into queſtion again? Is it not a preliminary? has it not been declared a preliminary by many gentlemen, who have yet given their opinion for a conference, while they have ſaid they were determined on no account, and on no condition, to give up our independence? It is then a neceſſary preliminary—and it is quite a different thing from any punctilios of ceremony. If France and England were at war, and they were both deſirous of peace, there might be ſome little difficulty as to who ſhould make the firſt propoſals; but if one of them ſhould claim the other, as they did long ago, as a vaſſal or dependent ſubject, and ſhould ſignify a deſire to converſe with the other, or ſome deputed by him, and propoſe him many privileges, ſo as to make him even better than before, I deſire to know how ſuch a propoſal would be received? If we had been for ages an independent republic, we ſhould feel this argument with all its force. That we do not feel it, ſhews that we have not yet acquired the whole ideas and habits

of independence; from which I only infer, that every ſtep taken in a correſpondence as now propoſed, will be a virtual or partial renunciation of that dignity ſo lately acquired.

I beg you would obſerve, Sir, that Lord Howe himſelf was fully ſenſible that the declaration of independence precluded any treaty, in the character in which he appeared; as he is ſaid to have lamented that he had not arrived ten days ſooner, before that declaration was made. Hence it appears, that entering into any correſpondence with him in the manner now propoſed, is actually giving up, or at leaſt ſubjecting to a new conſideration, the independence which we have declared. If I may be allowed to ſay it without offence, it ſeems to me that ſome members have unawares admitted this, though they are not ſenſible of it; for when they ſay that it is refuſing to treat, unleſs the whole be granted us, they muſt mean that ſome part of that whole muſt be left to be diſcuſſed and obtained, or yielded, by the treaty.

But, Sir, many members of this houſe have either yielded, or at leaſt ſuppoſed, that no deſirable peace, or no real good, could be finally expected from this correſpondence, which is wiſhed to be ſet on foot; but they have conſidered it as neceſſary in the eye of the public, to ſatisfy them that we are always ready to hear any thing that will reſtore peace to the country. In this view it is conſidered as a ſort of trial of ſkill between Lord Howe and us, in the political art. As I do truly believe, that many members of this houſe are determined by

this circumſtance, I ſhall conſider it with ſome attention. With this view it will be neceſſary to diſtinguiſh the public in America into three great claſſes. 1. The tories, our ſecret enemies. 2. The whigs, the friends of independence, our ſincere and hearty ſupporters. 3. The army, who muſt fight for us.

As to the firſt of them, I readily admit that they are earneſt for our treating. They are exulting in the proſpect of it; they are ſpreading innumerable lies to forward it. They are treating the whigs already with inſult and inſolence upon it. It has brought them from their lurking holes: they have taken liberty to ſay things in conſequence of it, which they durſt not have ſaid before. In one word, if we ſet this negociation on foot, it will give new force and vigour to all their ſeditious machinations. But, Sir, ſhall their devices have any influence upon us at all? if they have at all, it ſhould be to make us ſuſpect that ſide of the queſtion which they embrace. In caſes where the expediency of a meaſure is doubtful, if I had an opportunity of knowing what my enemies wiſhed me to do, I would not be eaſily induced to follow their advice.

As to the whigs and friends of independence, I am well perſuaded that multitudes of them are already clear in their minds, that the conference ſhould be utterly rejected; and to thoſe who are in doubt about its nature, nothing more will be requiſite, than a clear and full information of the ſtate of the caſe, which I hope will be granted them.

As to the army, I cannot help being of opinion, that nothing will more effectually deaden the operations of war, than what is propoſed. We do not ourſelves expect any benefit from it, but they will. And they will poſſibly impute our conduct to fear and jealouſy as to the iſſue of the cauſe; which will add to their preſent little diſcouragement, and produce a timorous and deſpondent ſpirit. — —

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SPEECH

IN

CONGRESS,

ON THE

CONVENTION

WITH

GENERAL BURGOYNE.

MR PRESIDENT,

I AM ſenſible, as every other gentleman in this houſe ſeems to be, of the great importance of the preſent queſtion. It is of much moment, as to private perſons, ſo to every incorporated ſociety, to preſerve its faith and honour in ſolemn contracts: and it is eſpecially ſo to us, as repreſenting the United States of America, aſſociated ſo lately, and juſt beginning to appear upon the public ſtage. I hope, therefore, we ſhall deteſt the thoughts of embracing any meaſure which ſhall but appear to be mean, captious, or inſidious, whatever advantage may ſeem to ariſe from it. On the other hand, as the intereſt of this continent is committed to our care, it is our duty, and it will be expected of us, that we give the utmoſt attention that the

public ſuffer no injury by deception, or abuſe and inſult, on the part of our enemies.

On the firſt of theſe principles, it is clearly my opinion, that we ought, agreeably to the ſpirit of the firſt reſolution reported, to find, that the convention is not ſo broken, on the part of General Burgoyne, as to entitle us to refuſe compliance with it on ours, and detain him and his army as priſoners of war. I admit that there is ſomething very ſuſpicious in the circumſtance of the colours, when compared with his letter in the London Gazette, which makes mention of the Britiſh colours being ſeen flying upon the fort. I agree, at the ſame time, that the pretence of the cartouch boxes not being mentioned in the convention is plainly an evaſion. They ought, in fair conſtruction, to be comprehended under more expreſſions of that capitulation than one—arms, ammunition, warlike ſtores. They were ſo underſtood at the capitulation of St John's. In this preſent inſtance many of them were delivered up, which certainly ought to have been the caſe with all or none. And once more, I admit that the detention of the bayonets in the inſtances in which it was done, was undeniably unjuſt.

As to the firſt of theſe particulars, I am unwilling to diſtruſt the honour of a gentleman ſolemnly given; and therefore as General Burgoyne has given his honour to General Gates, that the colours were left in Canada, I ſuppoſe it is ſubſtantially true, whatever ſmall exception there might be to it. The colours ſeen flying at Tyconderoga, were perhaps old colours occaſionally found there, or perhaps taken from ſome of the veſſels lying at the place, and left

there when the army proceeded farther up the country. This is the rather probable, that if the regiments in general had had colours, they muſt have been ſeen very frequently by our army in the battles, or upon the march.

As to the other circumſtances, they are ſo mean and little in their nature, that I ſuppoſe them to have ariſen from the indiſcretion of individuals, quite unknown to the commander in chief, or even to the officers in general.

We ought alſo to conſider that it was ſo unexpected, and muſt have been ſo humiliating a thing, for a whole Britiſh army to ſurrender their arms, and deliver themſelves up priſoners to thoſe of whom they had been accuſtomed to ſpeak with ſuch contempt and diſdain—that it is not to be wondered at, if the common ſoldiers did ſome things out of ſpite and ill humour, not to be juſtified. To all theſe conſiderations, I will only add, that though the want of the colours deprives us of ſome enſigns of triumph which it would have been very grateful to the different ſtates to have diſtributed among them, and to have preſerved as monuments of our victory, the other things are ſo trifling and uneſſential, that it would probably be conſidered as taking an undue advantage, if we ſhould retain the whole army here on that account. I would therefore, Sir, have it clearly aſſerted, that though we are not inſenſible of thoſe irregularities, and they may contribute to make us attentive to what ſhall hereafter paſs before the embarkation, we do not conſider them as ſuch breaches of the convention, as will authorize us in juſtice to declare it void.

On the other hand, Sir, it is our indiſpenſable duty to uſe the greateſt vigilance, and to act with the greateſt firmneſs, in ſeeing that juſtice be done to the American States. Not only caution, but what I may call jealouſy and ſuſpicion, is neither unreaſonable nor indecent in ſuch a caſe. This will be juſtified by the knowledge of mankind. Hiſtory affords us many examples of evaſive and artful conduct in ſome of the greateſt men and moſt reſpectable nations, when hard preſſed by their neceſſities, or when a great advantage was in view. The behaviour of the Romans when their army was taken at the Caudine Forks may be produced as one. The conduct of the Samnites was not overwiſe; but that of the Romans was diſhonourable to the laſt degree, though there are civilians who defend it. Their conſul, after his army had paſſed through the yoke, a ſymbol at that time of the utmoſt infamy, made a peace with the Samnites. The ſenate refuſed to ratify it; but kept up a ſhew of regard to the faith plighted, by delivering up the conſul to the Samnites, to be uſed as they thought proper. That people anſwered, as was eaſily ſuggeſted by plain common ſenſe, that it was no reparation at all to them to torment or put one man to death; but that if they diſavowed the treaty, they ought to ſend back the army to the ſame ſpot of ground in which they had been ſurrounded. No ſuch thing, however, was done. But the Romans, notwithſtanding, immediately broke the league; and with the ſame army which had been let go, or a great part of it, brought the unhappy Samnites to deſtruction.—Such inſtances may be brought from

modern as well as ancient times. It is even the opinion of many perſons of the beſt judgment, that the convention entered into by the late duke of Cumberland, was by no means ſtrictly obſerved by the court of London.

When I conſider this, Sir, I confeſs I look upon the expreſſion in General Burgoyne's letter to General Gates, of November 14, as of the moſt alarming nature. For no other or better reaſon, even ſo much as pretended, than that his quarters were not ſo commodious as he expected, he declares *the public faith is broke, and we are the immediate ſufferers*. In this he expreſsly declares and ſubſcribes his opinion, that the convention is broken on our part; and in the laſt expreſſion, we are the *immediate* ſufferers, every perſon muſt perceive a menacing intimation of who ſhall be the ſufferers when he ſhall have it in his power.

Being ſufficiently ſettled as to the principle on which I ſhall found my opinion, it is unneceſſary for me to give an account of the law of nature and nations, or to heap up citations from the numerous writers on that ſubject. But that what I ſhall ſay may have the greater force, I beg it may be obſerved, that the law of nature and nations is nothing elſe but the law of general reaſon, or thoſe obligations of duty from reaſon and conſcience, on one individual to another, antecedent to any particular law derived from the ſocial compact, or even actual conſent. On this account, it is called the law of nature; and becauſe there are very rarely to be found any parties in ſuch a free ſtate with regard to each other, except independent nations, there-

fore it is alſo called the law of nations. One nation to another is juſt as man to man in a ſtate of nature. Keeping this in view, a perſon of integrity will paſs as ſound a judgment on ſubjects of this kind, by conſulting his own heart, as by turning over books and ſyſtems. The chief uſe of books and ſyſtems is, to apply the principle to particular caſes and ſuppoſitions differently claſſed, and to point out the practice of nations in ſeveral minute and ſpecial particulars, which unleſs aſcertained by practice, would be very uncertain and ambiguous.

But, Sir, I muſt beg your attention, and that of the houſe, to the nature of the caſe before us—at leaſt as I think it ought to be ſtated. I am afraid that ſome members may be miſled, by conſidering this declaration of General Burgoyne as an irregularity of the ſame ſpecies, if I may ſpeak ſo, with the other indiſcretions or even frauds, if you pleaſe to call them ſo, of withholding the cartouch boxes, or hiding or ſtealing the bayonets. The queſtion is not, whether this or the other thing done by the army is a breach of the convention. I have for my part given up all theſe particulars, and declared my willingneſs to ratify the convention, after I have heard them and believe them to be true. But we have here the declared opinion of one of the parties, that the public faith is broken by the other. Now, the ſimpleſt man in the world knows, that a mutual onerous contract is always conditional; and that if the condition fails on one ſide, whether from neceſſity or fraud, the other is free. Therefore we have reaſon to conclude, that if Mr Burgoyne is of opinion that the convention is broken on our part, he

will not hold to it on his. He would act the part of a fool if he did. It is of no consequence to say his opinion is ill-founded or unjust, as it manifestly is in the present case; for whether it is just or unjust, if it is *really* his opinion (and we should wrong his sincerity to doubt it) the consequences are the same with respect to us. Men do often, perhaps generally, adhere with greater obstinacy to opinions that are ill, than those that are well founded, and avenge imaginary or trifling injuries with greater violence than those that are real and great. Nay, we may draw an argument for our danger from the very injustice of his complaint. If he has conceived the convention to be broken on so frivolous a pretence as that his lodging is not quite commodious, after the just caution inserted by General Gates in the preliminary articles, what have we to expect from him as soon as he shall recover his liberty, and the power of doing mischief? It shews a dispostion to find fault, and an impatience under his present confinement, the future effects of which we have the greatest reason to dread.

The more I consider this matter, Sir, the more it strikes me with its force. General Gates says upon the subject of accommodation, *granted as far as circumstances will admit.* Was not this proper and necessary? It was very natural to suppose that General Burgoyne, accustomed to the splendor of the British court, and possessed with ideas of his own importance, would be but ill pleased with the best accommodations that could be obtained for him, and his numerous followers, in one of the frugal states of New England. It was also in the neighbourhood

of a place not in the leaſt expecting the honour of ſuch gueſts, which had been long the ſeat of war which had been exhauſted by our army, and plundered by their's. One would have thought that the recollection of the ruin of Charleſtown, the burning of which, if I miſtake not, in a letter of his from Boſton to England, he calls a glorious light, might have prevented his complaints, even though he had leſs elbow room than he wiſhed for. But as circumſtances ſtand, by what conduct ſhall we be able to ſatisfy him? When will pretences ever be wanting to one ſeeking to prove the convention broken, when it is his inclination or his intereſt to do ſo?

It has been ſaid, Sir, that we ought not to take this declaration of his in ſo ſerious a manner: that it was written raſhly, and in the heat of paſſion; and that he did not mean that we ſhould dread ſuch conſequences from it. All this I believe to be ſtrictly true. It probably fell from him in paſſion—and very unadviſedly. But is he the firſt perſon that has raſhly betrayed his own miſchievous deſigns? Or is this a reaſon for our not availing ourſelves of the happy diſcovery? His folly in this inſtance is our good fortune. He is a man, Sir, whom I never ſaw, though I have been more than once in England; but if I ſhould ſay I did not know him, after having read his lofty and ſonorous proclamation, and ſome other productions, I ſhould ſay what was not true. He is evidently a man ſhowy, vain, impetuous, and raſh. It is reported of General Gates, from whom I never heard that any other words of boaſting or oſtentation fell, that he ſaid he knew Burgoyne, and that he could build a wall for him to run his head againſt

I do not by any means approve of boasting in general. I think a man should not boast of what he has done, much less of what he only means to do; yet I cannot help saying, that this was a most accurate prediction, which, with the event that followed it, plainly points out to us the character of General Burgoyne. Do you think that such a man would not take the advantage of this pretended breach of the convention on our part; and endeavour to wipe off the reproach of his late ignominious surrender by some signal or desperate undertaking? — —

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SPEECH

IN

CONGRESS,

ON A

MOTION FOR PAYING

THE INTEREST OF

LOAN-OFFICE CERTIFICATES.

MR PRESIDENT,

I MUST entreat the attention of the houſe, while I endeavour to ſtate this ſubject with as much brevity and perſpicuity as I am maſter of. It is not eaſy to forbear mentioning, yet I ſhall but barely mention, the diſtreſſed and unhappy ſituation of many of the perſons concerned in the public loans. I ſhall alſo paſs by their characters, as whigs and friends to the American cauſe. I ſhall paſs by the ſervices which many of them have rendered, in their perſons, by their friends, by their purſes, and by their prayers. Theſe are affecting conſiderations, which ought not, and which I am confident will not fail, to have their weight with every member of this houſe. Let us then, leave theſe topics altogether, and let us confine ourſelves to the duty and

intereſt of the United States in their preſent ſituation, when the care of their affairs is committed to us who are here aſſembled.

Public credit is of the utmoſt moment to a ſtate which expects to ſupport itſelf, at any time; but it is all in all in a time of war. The want of it defeats the wiſeſt meaſures, and renders every department torpid and motionleſs. It cannot be denied, that by many unhappy, if not unwiſe meaſures, public credit among us has been reduced to the loweſt ebb, firſt by a monſtrous and unheard of emiſſion of paper money; next by an act of bankruptcy, reducing it to ſix pence in the pound; then by a table of depreciation. There remained but one thing which preſerved us ſome degree of reſpectability, that the promiſes made to lenders of money before a certain period, had been kept for three years; but now as the laſt and finiſhing ſtroke, this alſo is broken to pieces, and given to the winds.

Let not gentlemen cry out as before, why diſtinguiſh theſe people from other public creditors? I do not diſtinguiſh them by aſking payment for them alone; but I diſtinguiſh them, becauſe their circumſtances and diſappointment give a new and diſgraceful ſtroke to the credit of the United States. I diſtinguiſh them, becauſe I hope that their ſufferings and complaints may induce us to take ſome ſtep towards the payment of all. Strange it is to the laſt degree, that this compariſon ſhould ſeem to ſet gentlemen's minds at eaſe—becauſe great injury has been done to one claſs, therefore the ſame may and ought to be done to another. In this way

it would be very eaſy to rid ourſelves of both, and to ſay, why all this noiſe about loan-office certificates? have not all the receivers of continental bills ſuffered as much or more than they, and had the immenſe ſum of two hundred millions ſunk in their hands?—If this would be a good anſwer in one caſe, it certainly would in the other. Now is it proper or ſafe in our preſent ſituation, to refuſe all kind of payment to the public creditors in this country, ſo numerous and ſo variouſly circumſtanced? Let us examine it a little.

We are now endeavouring to borrow, and have the hope of borrowing money in Europe. Is this the way to ſucceed? Is it not poſſible, is it not highly probable, that our treatment of our creditors here, will ſoon be known there? Nay, are not ſome of our creditors intereſted in this very meaſure, reſiding there? Muſt not this repeated inſolvency, neglect and even contempt of public creditors, prevent people from lending us in Europe? I am ſorry to ſay it, but in truth I do believe that it is their ignorance of our ſituation and paſt conduct, that alone will make them truſt us. I confeſs, that if I were at Amſterdam juſt now and had plenty of money, I would give what I thought proper to the United States, but would lend them none.

It is to be hoped, that in time truth and juſtice will ſo far prevail, that our poſterity will ſee the neceſſity of doing their duty; but at preſent we ſeem but little diſpoſed to it.—By making ſome payment to the public creditors immediately, and proſecuting the meaſures already begun for further ſecurity, we ſhould obtain a dignity and weight a-

broad, that would procure money wherever it could be found.

Let us next conſider the effect upon our credit at home. It has ever been my opinion, that if our ſecurity were good, and our credit entire, ſo that obligations by the public would be turned into money at any time, at par or at little leſs, we ſhould find no inconſiderable number of lenders. Every thing of this kind proceeds upon ſuch certain principles as never to fail in any inſtance of having their effect. From the general diſpoſition, that prevails in this new country, real eſtate is leſs eſteemed, and money at intereſt more, that is to ſay comparatively ſpeaking, than in the old. Now, whatever ſucceſs we may have in Europe, I am perſuaded we ſhould ſtill need, or at leaſt be much the better of loans at home, which are in their nature preferable to thoſe abroad; and therefore whatever leads utterly to deſtroy our credit at home, does an eſſential injury to the public cauſe. Nay, though there were not any proper loans to be expected or attempted at home, ſome truſting to public credit would be neceſſary, to make thoſe to whom we are already indebted patient, or at leaſt ſilent for ſome time. To this may be added that annihilating public credit, or rather rendering it contemptible, has an unhappy influence upon every particular internal temporary operation. People will not ſeek your ſervice, but fly from it. Hence it is well known, that ſometimes ſtores and ammunition or other neceſſaries for the army, have ſtood ſtill upon the road till they were half loſt for want of ready money, or

people who would truſt you, to carry them forward.

We muſt now go a little further, and ſay, that if this propoſition is inforced, it will be a great hindrance to the payment of taxes, and raiſing the ſupplies which muſt be called for from the ſtates. I do not inſiſt upon what has been already mentioned, that the payment propoſed would enable many to pay their taxes; becauſe, though that is certainly true with reſpect to thoſe who ſhall receive it, and though it is admitted they are pretty numerous, yet in my opinion, it is but a trifle to the other effects of it, both in the poſitive and negative way. It would give dignity to the public ſpirit, and animation to the people in general. It would give the people better thoughts of their rulers, and prevent murmuring at public perſons and public meaſures. I need not tell this houſe how much depends in a free ſtate, upon having the eſteem and attachment of the people. It is but a very general view that people at a diſtance can take of the management of men in public truſt; but in general it is well known, they are abundantly jealous, and as ready to believe evil as good. I do not ſpeak by gueſs, but from facts, when I tell you that they ſay, we are now paying prodigious taxes, but what becomes of all the money? The army, ſay they, get none of it, being almoſt two years in arrear. The public creditors ſay they get none of it, not even intereſt for their money. This was told me by the county collector of Somerſet county, New Jerſey, who was not a contentious man, but wiſhed to know what he ought to ſay to the people. Now this

ſmall payment, as it would be very general, would be much talked of; and I am perſuaded, for its general good influence, would be worth all, and more than all the ſum we ſhall beſtow. I have heard it ſaid in ſome ſimilar caſes, you muſt ſometimes throw a little water into a pump, in order to bring a great deal out of it.

Now, on the other hand, what will be the conſequence of a total refuſal? You have told the public creditors, that you have no money in Europe to draw for. They will very ſpeedily hear of this loan in Holland. They are ſufficiently exaſperated already; this will add to their indignation. They really are already ſore; their minds will be rankled more than ever. They are looking with an evil eye upon ſome new men coming into play, and thinking themſelves unjuſtly and ungratefully uſed. I believe they are not ſo much without principle, as to turn their backs upon the public cauſe; but a ſpirit of faction and general diſcontent, upon ſuch plauſible grounds, may do it eſſential injury. They may combine to refuſe their taxes; and if any ſuch unhappy aſſociation ſhould be formed, it would ſpread; and many from a blind attachment to their own intereſt, would pretend to be upon the ſame footing, though they have no concern in the matter: and if this diſpoſition ſhould become general, it would put an entire ſtop to all our proceedings. This diſcouraging proſpect is not merely founded on conjecture. I have been told that there have already been meetings for entering into concert for refuſing to pay taxes. Is it poſſible we can, in our circumſtances, more profitably employ the ſum

mentioned in the motion, than in giving ſatisfaction to a deſerving body of men, and in preventing evils of ſo alarming a nature.

It is poſſible, Sir, that ſome are comforting themſelves with their own ſincerity and good intentions; that they ultimately reſolve to pay all honourably; that they have taken, and are taking meaſures to prepare for it.—A ſum of money is called for on purpoſe to pay the intereſt of the public debts; and the five per cent. impoſt is appropriated to the ſame purpoſe. But, Sir, it will take a conſiderable time before the moſt ſpeedy of theſe meaſures can bring money into the treaſury; and in the mean time the late ſtep of refuſing to draw bills, has given ſuch a ſtroke to loan-office certificates, that their value is fallen to a very trifle—the ſpirits of the people are broken—a gentleman told me the other day, I ſee the loan-office certificates are gone, as well as all the reſt of the money. The inevitable conſequence will be, that hard and irreſiſtible neceſſity, or incredulity and ill humour, will make them part with them for a mere nothing; and then the greateſt part of them by far will really be in the hands of ſpeculators. When this is notoriouſly the caſe, I ſhall not be at all ſurpriſed to find that ſomebody will propoſe a new ſcale of depreciation, and ſay to the holders, you ſhall have them for what they were worth and generally ſold at, at ſuch a time. Paſt experience juſtifies this expectation, and no declaration we can make to the contrary, will be ſtronger than that of Congreſs in the year 1779, that they would redeem the money, and that it was a vile and ſlanderous aſſertion, that they

would ſuffer it to ſink in people's hands. I know particular perſons alſo, who by believing this declaration, loſt their all. Now, if this ſhall be the caſe again, public faith will be once more trodden under foot; and the few remaining original holders of certificates will looſe them entirely, being taken in connection with thoſe who purchaſed them at an under value.

PART

OF A

SPEECH IN CONGRESS,

ON THE

FINANCES.

MR PRESIDENT,

I HAVE little to ſay againſt the reſolutions, as they ſtand reported by the ſuperintendant of finance. Perhaps they are unavoidable in the circumſtances to which we are reduced. Yet the ſtep ſeems to be ſo very important, and the conſequences of it ſo much to be dreaded, that I muſt intreat the patience of the houſe, till I ſtate the danger in a few words, and examine whether any thing can poſſibly be added to it, which may in ſome degree prevent the evils which we apprehend, or at leaſt exculpate Congreſs, and convince the public that it is the effect of abſolute neceſſity.

Sir, if we enter into theſe reſolves as they ſtand, it will be a deliberate deviation from an expreſs and abſolute ſtipulation, and therefore it will, as it was expreſſed by an honourable gentleman the other day,

give the laſt ſtab to public credit. It will be in vain, in future, to aſk the public to believe any promiſe we ſhall make, even when the moſt clear and explicit grounds of confidence are produced. Perhaps it will be ſaid that public credit is already gone; and it hath been ſaid that there is no more in this, than in neglecting to pay the intereſt of the loan-office certificates of later date; but though there were no other differences between them, this being another and freſher inſtance of the ſame, will have an additional evil influence upon public credit. But in fact, there is ſomething more in it than in the other. The ſolemn ſtipulation of Congreſs, ſpecifying the manner in which the intereſt was to be paid, was conſidered as an additional ſecurity, and gave a value to theſe certificates, which the others never had. I beg that no gentleman may think that I hold it a light matter to withhold the intereſt from the other lenders; they will be convinced, I hope, of the contrary before I have done; but I have made the compariſon merely to ſhew what will be the influence of this meaſure upon the public mind, and therefore upon the credit and eſtimation of Congreſs. Now it is plain, that the particular promiſe of giving bills upon Europe, as it had an effect, and was intended to have it in procuring credit, it muſt, when broken or withdrawn, operate in the moſt powerful manner to our prejudice. I will give an example of this, in our melancholy paſt experience. The old continental money was diſgraced and ſunk, firſt by the act of March 18th, 1780, (which the Duke de Vergennes juſtly called an act of bankruptcy,) telling you would pay no more of your debt

than fixpence in the pound. This was afterwards further improved by new eſtimates of depreciation, of ſeventy-five and one hundred and fifty, for new ſtate paper, which itſelf was ſunk to two or three for one; and yet bad as theſe men's caſes were, the diſgrace ariſing from them was more than doubled, by people's referring to, and repeating a public declaration of Congreſs, in which we complained of the injurious ſlanders of thoſe that ſaid we would ſuffer the money to ſink in the hands of the holders, and making the moſt ſolemn proteſtations, that ultimately the money ſhould be redeemed dollar for dollar; and to my knowledge, ſome truſting to that very declaration, ſold their eſtates at what they thought a high price, and brought themſelves to utter ruin.

I cannot help requeſting Congreſs to attend to the ſtate of thoſe perſons who held the loan-office certificates which drew intereſt on France; they are all, without exception, the firmeſt and ſafeſt friends to the cauſe of America; they were in general the moſt firm, and active, and generous friends. Many of them advanced large ſums of hard money, to aſſiſt you in carrying on the war in Canada. None of them at all put away even the loan-office certificates on ſpeculation, but either from a generous intention of ſerving the public, or from an entire confidence in the public credit. There is one circumſtance which ought to be attended to, *viz.* the promiſe of intereſt—bills on Europe were not made till the 10th of September, 1777. It was ſaid a day or two ago, that thoſe who ſent in caſh a little before March 1ſt, 1778, had by the depreciated ſtate of

the money, received almoſt their principal; but this makes but a ſmall part of the money, for there were but ſix months for the people to put in the money, after the promiſe was made; only the moſt apparent juſtice obliged Congreſs to extend the privilege to thoſe who had put in their money before. Beſides, nothing can be more unequal and injurious than reckoning the money by the depreciation either before or after the 1ſt of March, 1778, for a great part of the money in all the Loan offices was ſuch as had been paid up in its nominal value, in conſequence of the Tender laws.

This points you, Sir, to another claſs of people, from whom money was taken, *viz.* widows and orphans, corporations and public bodies. How many guardians were actually led, or indeed were obliged, to put their depreciated and depreciating money into the funds—I ſpeak from good knowledge. The truſtees of the college of New Jerſey, in June, 1777, directed a committee of theirs to put all the money that ſhould be paid up to them, in the loan-office, ſo that they have now nearly inveſted all. Some put in before March, 1778, and a greater part ſubſequent to that date. Now it muſt be known to every body, that ſince the payment of the intereſt bills gave a value to theſe early loans, many have continued their intereſt in them, and reſted in a manner wholly on them for ſupport. Had they entertained the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion that they would be cut off, they could have ſold them for ſomething, and applied themſelves to other means of ſubſiſtence; but as the caſe now ſtands, you are reducing not an inconſiderable number of

your very beſt friends to abſolute beggary. During the whole period, and through the whole ſyſtem of continental money, your friends have ſuffered alone—the diſaffected and lukewarm have always evaded the burden—have in many inſtances turned the ſufferings of the country to their own account—have triumphed over the whigs—and if the whole ſhall be crowned with this laſt ſtroke, it ſeems but reaſonable that they ſhould treat us with inſult and deriſion. And what faith do you expect the public creditors ſhould place in your promiſe of ever paying them at all? What reaſon, after what is paſt, have they to dread that you will divert the fund which is now mentioned as a diſtant ſource of payment? If a future Congreſs ſhould do this, it would not be one whit worſe than what has been already done.

I wiſh, Sir, this houſe would weigh a little, the public conſequences that will immediately follow this reſolution. The grief, diſappointment and ſufferings of your beſt friends, has been already mentioned—then prepare yourſelves to hear from your enemies the moſt inſulting abuſe. You will be accuſed of the moſt oppreſſive tyranny, and the groſseſt fraud. If it be poſſible to poiſon the minds of the public, by making this body ridiculous or contemptible, they will have the faireſt opportunity of doing ſo, that ever was put in their hands. But I muſt return to our plundered, long ruined friends; we cannot ſay to what their rage and diſappointment may bring them; we know that nothing on earth is ſo deeply reſentful, as deſpiſed or rejected love—whether they may proceed to any violent or diſor-

derly meaſures, it is impoſſible to know. We have an old proverb, That the eyes will break through ſtone walls, and for my own part, I ſhould very much dread the furious and violent efforts of deſpair. Would to God, that the independence of America was once eſtabliſhed by a treaty of peace in Europe; for we know that in all great and fierce political contention, the effect of power and circumſtances is very great; and that if the tide has run long with great violence one way, if it does not fully reach its purpoſe, and is by any means brought to a ſtand, it is apt to take a direction, and return with the ſame or greater violence than it advanced. Muſt this be riſked at a criſis when the people begin to be fatigued with the war, to feel the heavy expence of it, by paying taxes; and when the enemy, convinced of their folly in their former ſeverities, are doing every thing they can to ingratiate themſelves with the public at large. But though our friends ſhould not be induced to take violent and ſeditious meaſures all at once, I am almoſt certain it will produce a particular hatred and contempt of Congreſs, the repreſentative body of the union, and ſtill a greater hatred of the individuals who compoſe the body at this time. One thing will undoubtedly happen; that it will greatly abate the reſpect which is due from the public to this body, and therefore weaken their authority in all other parts of their proceedings.

I beg leave to ſay, Sir, that in all probability, it will lay the foundation for other greater and more ſcandalous ſteps of the ſame kind. You will ſay what greater can there be? Look back a little to

your hiſtory. The firſt and great deliberate breach of public faith, was the act of March 18th, 1780, reducing the money to forty for one, which was declaring you would pay your debt at ſixpence in the pound—But did it not turn? No, by and by it was ſet in this ſtate and others at ſeventy-five, and finally ſet one hundred and fifty for one, in new paper, in ſtate paper, which in ſix months, roſe to four for one. Now, Sir, what will be the caſe with theſe certificates? Before this propoſal was known, their fixed price was about half a crown for a dollar of the eſtimated depreciated value; when this reſolution is fairly fixed, they will immediately fall in value, perhaps to a ſhilling the dollar, probably leſs. Multitudes of people in deſpair, and abſolute neceſſity, will ſell them for next to nothing, and when the holders come at laſt to apply for their money, I think it highly probable, you will give them a ſcale of depreciation, and tell them, they coſt ſo little that it would be an injury to the public to pay the full value. And in truth, Sir, ſuppoſing you finally to pay the full value of the certificates to the holders, the original and moſt meritorious proprietors will in many, perhaps in moſt caſes, loſe the whole.

It will be very proper to conſider what effect this will have upon foreign nations; certainly it will ſet us in a moſt contemptible light. We are juſt beginning to appear among the powers of the earth, and it may be ſaid of national, as of private characters, they ſoon begin to form, and when diſadvantageous ideas are formed, they are not eaſily altered or deſtroyed. In the very inſtance before us, many of

theſe certificates are poſſeſſed by the ſubjects of foreign princes, and indeed are in foreign parts. We muſt not think that other ſovereigns will ſuffer their ſubjects to be plundered in ſo wanton and extravagant a manner. You have on your files, letters from the Count de Vergennes, on the ſubject of your former depreciation; in which he tells you, that whatever liberty you take with your own ſubjects, you muſt not think of treating the ſubjects of France in the ſame way; and it is not impoſſible that you may hear upon this ſubject, what you little expect, when the terms of peace are to be ſettled. I do not in the leaſt doubt that it may be demanded that you ſhould pay to the full of its nominal value, all the money as well as loan-office certificates, which ſhall be found in the hands of the ſubjects of France, Spain or Holland, and it would be perfectly juſt. I have mentioned France, &c. but it is not only not impoſſible, but highly probable, that by accident or danger, or both, many of theſe loan-office certificates may be in the hands of Engliſh ſubjects. Do you think they will not demand payment? Do you think they will make any difference between their being before or after March 1ſt, 1778? And will you preſent them with a ſcale of depreciation? Remember the affair of the Canada bills, in the laſt peace between England and France—I wiſh we could take example from our enemies. How many fine diſſertations have we upon the merit of national truth and honour in Great-Britain. Can we think without bluſhing, upon our contrary conduct in the matter of finance? By their punctuality in fulfilling their engagements as to intereſt, they have been able to

ſupport a load of debt altogether enormous. Be pleaſed to obſerve, Sir, that they are not wholly without experience of depreciation: navy debentures and ſailors' tickets have been frequently ſold at an half, and ſometimes even at a third of their value; by that means they ſeem to be held by that claſs of men called by us ſpeculators. Did that government ever think of preſenting the holders of them, when they came to be paid, with a ſcale of depreciation? The very idea of it would knock the whole ſyſtem of public credit to pieces.

But the importance of this matter will be felt before the end of the war. We are at this time earneſtly ſoliciting foreign loans. With what face can we expect to have credit in foreign parts, and in future loans, after we have ſo notoriouſly broken every engagement which we have hitherto made? A diſpoſition to pay, and viſible probable means of payment, are abſolutely neceſſary to credit; and where that is once eſtabliſhed, it is not difficult to borrow. If it may be a mean of turning the attention of Congreſs to this ſubject, I beg of them to obſerve, that if they could but lay down a foundation of credit, they would get money enough to borrow in this country, where we are. There is property enough here; and, comparatively ſpeaking, there is a great number of perſons here who would prefer money at intereſt to purchaſing and holding real eſtates. The ideas of all old country people are high in favour of real eſtate. Though the intereſt of money, even upon the very beſt ſecurity there, is from four to four and a half, four and three quarters, and five per centum; yet when any

real eſtate is to be ſold, there will be ten purchaſers where one only can obtain it, and it will coſt ſo much as not to bring more than two, two and a half, and at moſt three per centum.

It is quite otherwiſe in this country, and indeed it ought to be otherwiſe. To purchaſe an eſtate in the cultivated parts of the country, except what a man poſſeſſes himſelf, will not be near ſo profitable as the intereſt of money; and in many caſes where it is rented out, it is ſo waſted and worn by the tenant, that it would be a greater profit at the end of ſeven years, that the land had been left to itſelf, to bear woods and buſhes that ſhould rot upon the ground, without any rent at all. Any body alſo may ſee, that it is almoſt univerſal in this country, when a man dies leaving infant children, that the executors ſell all his property to turn it into money, and put it in ſecurities for eaſy and equal diviſion.

All theſe things, Mr Preſident, proceed upon certain and indubitable principles, which never fail of their effect. Therefore, you have only to make your payments as ſoon, as regular, and as profitable as other borrowers, and you will get all the money you want; and by a ſmall advantage over others, it will be poured in upon you, ſo that you ſhall not need to go to the lenders, for they will come to you.

PART

OF A

SPEECH IN CONGRESS,

UPON THE

CONFEDERATION.

THE abſolute neceſſity of union to the vigour and ſucceſs of thoſe meaſures on which we are already entered, is felt and confeſſed by every one of us, without exception; ſo far, indeed, that thoſe who have expreſſed their fears or ſuſpicions of the exiſting confederacy proving abortive, have yet agreed in ſaying that there muſt and ſhall be a confederacy for the purpoſes of, and till the finiſhing of this war. So far it is well; and ſo far it is pleaſing to hear them expreſs their ſentiments. But I intreat gentlemen calmly to conſider how far the giving up all hopes of a laſting confederacy among theſe ſtates, for their future ſecurity and improvement, will have an effect upon the ſtability and efficacy of even the temporary confederacy, which all acknowledge to be neceſſary? I am fully perſuaded, that when it ceaſes to be generally known, that the delegates of the provinces conſider a laſting union as impracticable, it will greatly derange the minds

of the people, and weaken their hands in defence of their country, which they have now undertaken with ſo much alacrity and ſpirit. I confeſs it would to me greatly diminiſh the glory and importance of the ſtruggle, whether conſidered as for the rights of mankind in general, or for the proſperity and happineſs of this continent in future times.

It would quite depreciate the object of hope, as well as place it at a greater diſtance. For what would it ſignify to riſk our poſſeſſions and ſhed our blood to ſet ourſelves free from the encroachments and oppreſſion of Great Britain—with a certainty, as ſoon as peace was ſettled with them of a more laſting war, a more unnatural, more bloody, and much more hopeleſs war, among the colonies themſelves? —Some of us conſider ourſelves as acting for poſterity at preſent, having little expectation of living to ſee all things fully ſettled, and the good conſequences of liberty taking effect. But how much more uncertain the hope of ſeeing the internal conteſts of the colonies ſettled upon a laſting and equitable footing?

One of the greateſt dangers I have always conſidered the colonies as expoſed to at preſent, is treachery among themſelves, augmented by bribery and corruption from our enemies. But what force would be added to the arguments of ſeducers, if they could ſay with truth, that it was of no conſequence whether we ſucceeded againſt Great Britain or not; for we muſt, in the end, be ſubjected, the greateſt part of us, to the power of one or more of the ſtrongeſt or largeſt of the American ſtates? And here I would apply the argument which we have

ſo often uſed againſt Great Britain—that in all hiſtory we ſee that the ſlaves of freemen, and the ſubject ſtates of republics, have been of all others the moſt grievouſly oppreſſed. I do not think the records of time can produce an inſtance of ſlaves treated with ſo much barbarity as the Helotes by the Lacedemonians, who were the moſt illuſtrious champions for liberty in all Greece; or of provinces more plundered and ſpoiled than the ſtates conquered by the Romans, for one hundred years before Cæſar's dictatorſhip. The reaſon is plain; there are many great men in free ſtates. There were many conſular gentlemen in that great republic, who all conſidered themſelves as greater than kings, and muſt have kingly fortunes, which they had no other way of acquiring but by governments of provinces, which laſted generally but one year, and ſeldom more than two.

In what I have already ſaid, or may ſay, or any caſes I may ſtate, I hope every gentleman will do me the juſtice to believe, that I have not the moſt diſtant view to particular perſons or ſocieties, and mean only to reaſon from the uſual courſe of things, and the prejudices inſeparable from men as ſuch. And can we help ſaying, that there will be a much greater degree, not only of the corruption of particular perſons, but the defection of particular provinces from the preſent confederacy, if they conſider our ſucceſs itſelf as only a prelude to a conteſt of a more dreadful nature, and indeed much more properly a civil war than that which now often obtains the name? Muſt not ſmall colonies in particular be in danger of ſaying, we muſt ſecure ourſelves?

If the colonies are independent ſtates, ſeparate and diſunited, after this war, we may be ſure of coming off by the worſe. We are in no condition to contend with ſeveral of them. Our trade in general, and our trade with them, muſt be upon ſuch terms as they ſhall be pleaſed to preſcribe.—What will be the conſequence of this? Will they not be ready to prefer putting themſelves under the protection of Great Britain, France or Holland, rather than ſubmit to the tyranny of their neighbours, who were lately their equals? Nor would it be at all impoſſible, that they ſhould enter into ſuch raſh engagements as would prove their own deſtruction, from a mixture of apprehended neceſſity and real reſentment.

Perhaps it may be thought that breaking off this confederacy, and leaving it unfiniſhed after we have entered upon it, will be only poſtponing the duty to ſome future period? Alas, nothing can exceed the abſurdity of that ſuppoſition. Does not all hiſtory cry out, that a common danger is the great and only effectual means of ſettling difficulties, and compoſing differences. Have we not experienced its efficacy in producing ſuch a degree of union through theſe colonies, as nobody would have propheſied, and hardly any would have expected?

If therefore, at preſent, when the danger is yet imminent, when it is ſo far from being over, that it is but coming to its height, we ſhall find it impoſſible to agree upon the terms of this confederacy, what madneſs is it to ſuppoſe that there ever will be a time, or that circumſtances will ſo change, as

to make it even probable, that it will be done at an after ſeaſon? Will not the very ſame difficulties that are in our way, be in the way of thoſe who ſhall come after us? Is it poſſible that they ſhould be ignorant of them, or inattentive to them? Will they not have the ſame jealouſies of each other, the ſame attachment to local prejudices, and particular intereſt? So certain is this, that I look upon it as on the repentance of a ſinner—Every day's delay, though it adds to the neceſſity, yet augments the difficulty, and takes from the inclination.

There is one thing that has been thrown out, by which ſome ſeem to perſuade themſelves of, and others to be more indifferent about the ſucceſs of a confederacy—that from the nature of men, it is to be expected, that a time muſt come when it will be diſſolved and broken in pieces. I am none of thoſe who either deny or conceal the depravity of human nature, till it is purified by the light of truth, and renewed by the Spirit of the living God. Yet I apprehend there is no force in that reaſoning at all. Shall we eſtabliſh nothing good, becauſe we know it cannot be eternal? Shall we live without government, becauſe every conſtitution has its old age, and its period? Becauſe we know that we ſhall die, ſhall we take no pains to preſerve or lengthen out life? Far from it, Sir: it only requires the more watchful attention, to ſettle government upon the beſt principles, and in the wiſeſt manner, that it may laſt as long as the nature of things will admit.

But I beg leave to ſay ſomething more, though with ſome riſk that it will be thought viſionary and

romantic. I do expect, Mr President, a progress, as in every other human art, so in the order and perfection of human society, greater than we have yet seen; and why should we be wanting to ourselves in urging it forward? It is certain, I think, that human science and religion have kept company together, and greatly assisted each other's progress in the world. I do not say that intellectual and moral qualities are in the same proportion in particular persons; but they have a great and friendly influence upon one another, in societies and larger bodies.

There have been great improvements, not only in human knowledge, but in human nature; the progress of which can be easily traced in history. Every body is able to look back to the time in Europe, when the liberal sentiments that now prevail upon the rights of conscience, would have been looked upon as absurd. It is but little above two hundred years since that enlarged system called the balance of power, took place; and I maintain, that it is a greater step from the former disunited and hostile situation of kingdoms and states, to their present condition, than it would be from their present condition to a state of more perfect and lasting union. It is not impossible, that in future times all the states on one quarter of the globe, may see it proper by some plan of union, to perpetuate security and peace; and sure I am, a well planned confederacy among the states of America, may hand down the blessings of peace and public order to many generations. The union of the seven provinces of the Low Countries, has never yet been

broken; and they are of very different degrees of ſtrength and wealth. Neither have the Cantons of Switzerland ever broken among themſelves, though there are ſome of them proteſtants, and ſome of them papiſts, by public eſtabliſhment. Not only ſo, but theſe confederacies are ſeldom engaged in a war with other nations. Wars are generally between monarchs, or ſingle ſtates that are large. A confederation of itſelf keeps war at a diſtance from the bodies of which it is compoſed.

For all theſe reaſons, Sir, I humbly apprehend, that every argument from honour, intereſt, ſafety and neceſſity, conſpire in preſſing us to a confederacy; and if it be ſeriouſly attempted, I hope, by the bleſſing of God upon our endeavours, it will be happily accompliſhed.

SPEECH

IN

CONGRESS,

ON THE APPOINTMENT OF

PLENIPOTENTIARIES.

Mr President,

I AM ſorry to obſerve, that after going through the inſtructions to be given to our plenipotentiary or plenipotentiaries, we ſhould have ſo warm a debate, and indeed ſeem to be ſo equally divided upon the queſtion, whether there ſhould be one or more to whom we will entruſt the negociation?

As to the practice of European nations, I believe it is ſo various as not to afford any argument on one ſide or the other; we may appoint one or more—there will be nothing ſingular or remarkable in it, ſo as to make our conduct look like ignorance in ſuch matters. I am inclined to think, however, that negociations are generally conducted near to their concluſion, by one confidential perſon, though after the more important preliminaries are ſettled, more may be ſometimes appointed, to give greater ſolemnity to the concluſion. We are therefore at

liberty to determine ourſelves wholly by the general reaſon and nature of the thing, and our own particular circumſtances.

As to the firſt of theſe, on the ſide of one perſon, it may be ſaid, there will be more preciſion, more expedition, more uniformity, and more certainty of agreement with others, and conſiſtency with himſelf. And the perſon whom we have employed, is a man of ſound and clear underſtanding, and has had the advantage of being a long time in Europe, and no doubt has been turning his thoughts, and making enquiries upon the ſubject ever ſince he went there; ſo that we may ſuppoſe him pretty ripely adviſed.

On the other ſide, it may be ſaid, that, if alone, he might be at a loſs, and that it would be of advantage to him to have the advice of others. It is even ſaid, that there is a neceſſity of others better acquainted with parts of the country different from thoſe with which he has been chiefly connected.—As to council, that does not ſtrike me much—perhaps there is greater ſafety in one than three; becauſe he is fully reſponſible; whereas if a common council is taken, the blame is divided, and every one is leſs difficulted to juſtify his conduct in the iſſue. Beſides, is there no danger to the cauſe itſelf, from an obſtinate diviſion of ſentiments in thoſe who are entruſted with the conduct of it? This would expoſe us, in the opinion of thoſe who obſerved it, and might perhaps give leſs reſpect to what each or all of them might ſay or do.

As to the neceſſity of perſons from different parts of the country, it is not eaſy to conceive what cir-

cumſtances, in a negociation of this kind, can be peculiar to one part of the country more than another. If it were to make rules for the internal government, taxation, or commerce of the ſtates, there would be ſome force in the remark; but when it is only to make peace for the liberty and protection of all, there ſeems to be little weight in it.

But now let us conſider our particular circumſtances. Mention has been made of the difference between Mr Adams and the count de Vergennes. I have given particular attention to all that was ſaid in his letter upon that ſubject, and all that has been ſaid by the miniſter of France here; and there was not one hint given that could lead us to think it was their deſire or expectation that he ſhould be diſmiſſed or ſuperſeded, or even bridled by the addition of others in the commiſſion. We have fully complied with their deſire upon this ſubject, in the inſtructions. There is the greateſt reaſon to think that they are well ſatisfied upon it. But if we ſhould ſtill go further, and either diſcharge him, or do what is in ſubſtance the ſame, or might be ſuppoſed or conceived by him to be the ſame, this would rather be an act of too great obſequiouſneſs, and but an ill example for the future conduct of our affairs. What we do now, will be often mentioned in after times; and if the like practice prevail, it will diſcourage public ſervants from fidelity, and leſſen their dignity and firmneſs. There is alſo ſome reaſon to fear that there may not be the moſt perfect agreement among them; and if a jealouſy in point of affection between them ſhould ariſe, it might ſtill be more fatal than a dif-

ference in opinion. You may obſerve, that Dr Franklin particularly mentions the impropriety of having more miniſters than one at one court and in the ſame place. We have felt the bad conſequences of that already in more inſtances than one. Congreſs were led into ſuch ſteps as ended in our parting with Mr Lee, chiefly by the argument of his being diſagreeable to the French court; and though he was in my opinion one of the moſt able, faithful, and active ſervants we ever had, and certainly one of the moſt diſintereſted—he was but barely able to go off with a cold ceremonial adieu, that had very little in it of a grateful ſenſe of his ſervices, or cordial approbation. It is not pleaſant to reflect, Mr Preſident, that ſo early in the hiſtory of this new ſtate, perſons in public employment ſhould be ſo prone to enter into ambitious contention, and puſh one another into diſgrace.

I cannot help putting you in mind, upon this ſubject, of what has juſt now come to light. You are informed by the French court, in the moſt authentic manner, and indeed if I am not miſtaken, it is by implication at leaſt in the king's letter, that you had been ill ſerved by the people you employed there, and cheated both in point of quality and price; and that on this account they intend to give directions on that ſubject themſelves. Now, Sir, perhaps it may be news to many members of this body, that theſe were the very contracts made by Mr Dean, without the knowledge or conſent of Mr Lee, of which Mr Lee loudly complained. Theſe were the very ſervants whoſe accounts Mr Lee objected to, and whoſe conduct he cenſured. But what did he get

by it? Mr Dean was supported by his venerable old friend, as he called him: Mr Lee was complained of as jealous and troublesome, and disagreeable to the court of France; and not only opposed and slighted by many members of this house, but I may say attacked and persecuted in such a manner, that if he had not been supported with a generous frankness by others, might have ended in public infamy.

I have just further upon this subject to observe, that you very lately sent a new minister to the French court, Mr Laurens—a measure much disapproved by many; and it was then foretold, it would be a disgraceful thing to Dr Franklin. Probably he has conceived it in that light; and as he has no desire at all to return home, I am well convinced that this is the true cause of the desire expressed in his last letter to resign his commission.

Some have mentioned the importance of the matter, and that the chance is greater against corruption, where three are to be taken off, than one. It is very true, that *ceteries paribus*, as is commonly said, there is a greater chance for one incorruptible person in three than in one: but there are single persons in whom I would confide as much as in ten. And besides, the thing may be taken the other way; for there is a greater chance of finding one corruptible person in three than in one; and in a commission of that nature, one traitor is able to do much mischief, though the others are perfectly upright. He, being admitted into the secret, may not only disclose measures, but perplex them, let the abilities of his colleagues be what they will. I have seen a man in Congress, who upon the supposition of his being a

traitor, I am ſure had addreſs enough to draw many into his meaſures—many not contemptible in underſtanding, and ſincerely attached to their country's cauſe.

Before I conclude, I would ſay a little upon our circumſtances in another reſpect. The firſt appearances we make upon the public ſtage, are of conſequence. It is to be wiſhed therefore, that the credit of the United States were conſulted. If we were ſure that our commiſſioners would be immediately admitted to public and co-ordinate ſeſſion with the other plenipotentiaries, perhaps a commiſſion of three would be auguſt and honourable; but if, as I ſtrongly ſuſpect will be the caſe, they are not at firſt publicly admitted at all, but obliged to negociate through the plenipotentiaries of France—if, as it is not impoſſible, even in the ſettlement of the treaty, we are not conſidered as the formal contracting parties at all, but our intereſt attended to in articles as it were occaſionally introduced—if this is done as a ſalvo to the honour of England, and to purchaſe for us advantages ſubſtantial and durable, a pompous commiſſion to a number of delegates will rather leſſen our dignity, and detract from our wiſdom and caution.

Upon the whole, Sir, I am of opinion, that it would be much better to aſſign to one the commiſſion already given, with the inſtructions which have been cordially agreed upon, and ſeem to be in every reſpect agreeable to the deſires of the court of France, and the opinion of the king's miniſter in this country.

ON THE

PROPOSED MARKET

IN

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S CAMP.

To his Excellency General Washington, and the officers of the American Army.

SIR,

ABOUT ten days ago, I was informed that you were conſulting with the farmers in the neighbourhood, and laying a plan for holding a market at the camp. This was to me the moſt pleaſing news I had heard from camp for a long time. I ſuppoſed that you had now diſcovered the true and proper way of providing comforts and refreſhments to your ſoldiers, which, pardon me, I think has hitherto, in God's moſt holy will, been *hid from your eyes*. Laſt week's news-paper brought us the plan, in which I have been ſo much diſappointed, that I have taken pen in hand, to make a few remarks upon it, and ſubmit them to your view. Reſt aſſured that they come from a firm friend to American liberty, who has felt the tyranny of General Howe, and therefore holds him and his cauſe in deteſtation. You are not to expect from a plain country farmer, high ſounding language,

and well turned phraſes—It is poſſible I may be held in deriſion for this, by ſome of your learned generals; for I am told you have ſome who can write full as well as they can fight, perhaps better; be that however as it may, I mean to write only of what I think I underſtand, and ſhall make uſe of the plaineſt words poſſible, that I may be underſtood.

I muſt begin by ſaying, that if you are under any difficulty in ſupplying your army, either with the neceſſaries or conveniencies of life, it is wholly owing to miſtaken principles, or unfaithful conduct in the manner of procuring them. You are in the midſt of a plentiful country.—You command it by your ſword, except a ſmall ſpot in which the enemy is confined; and I moſt heartily wiſh you would pen them in cloſer than you do.—You have alſo the hearts of the country; for let people talk as they pleaſe of the number of tories, they are altogether inconſiderable to the friends of liberty, in every ſtate in this continent. When the Engliſh army leaves any place, we do not need your army to conquer it for us. All that were friends to them, flee with them, or ſkulk into corners trembling for their lives. Let us conſider then how the matter ſtands—Your army conſiſts, I ſhall ſuppoſe at preſent of 20,000 men; for though it was conſiderably larger lately, I reckon from the number gone home on recruiting parties, and for other reaſons, that may be about or near the truth. Suppoſe it however 25,000; if theſe were diſtributed one in every houſe, for the twenty-five thouſand houſes that are neareſt to the camp, they would not reach

ſo far eaſt as the Delaware, nor ſo far weſt as Lancaſter; and though no proviſions were brought into that ſpace on their account, they could be well fed, and the burden never felt. This ſhews that the whole difficulty ariſes from the neceſſity of procuring and tranſporting proviſions to ſuch a number of men collected together in one place, a difficulty which one would think might be eaſily ſurmounted. It is not my intention at preſent, to make remarks on the commiſſary's department for ſupplying the capital neceſſaries, though I want not inclination. Suffice it to ſay, that for refreſhments and ſmaller neceſſaries, you are now making an attempt towards the only effectual way, *viz.* a market, or in other words, inviting people to bring them to you of their own accord.

Now, Sir, I have read and conſidered your plan, the chief part of which is ſettling the prices of a variety of articles, which it is expected will be expoſed to ſale. Fixing the price of commodities, has been attempted by law in ſeveral ſtates among us, and it has increaſed the evil it was meant to remedy, as the ſame practice ever has done ſince the beginning of the world. Such laws, when they only ſay men ſhall be puniſhed if they ſell at any higher prices than the legal, and that if any will not ſell at theſe prices, their goods ſhall be taken by force, have ſome meaning in them, though little wiſdom; but to publiſh a liſt of fixed prices, as an encouragement to a weekly market, is a new ſtrain of policy indeed. If people bring their goods to market, and are willing to ſell them at theſe, or lower prices, is not that enough? and if they are

not willing to ſell, how ſhall they be made willing to come? Probably you were told theſe were reaſonable prices; now I ſhall be glad to know what you call a reaſonable price. If it be that which is proportioned to the demand on the one ſide, and the plenty or ſcarcity of goods on the other, I agree to it; but I affirm that this will fix of itſelf, by the conſent of the buyer and ſeller, better than it can be done by any politician upon earth. If you mean any thing elſe, it ſignifies nothing at all, whether it be *reaſonable* or not; for if it is not *agreeable*, as well as reaſonable, you might have one market day, but not a ſecond. There are ſome things which are not the object of human laws, and ſuch are all thoſe that eſſentially depend for their ſucceſs upon inward inclination. Laws, force, or any kind of limitation, are ſo far from having any tendency of themſelves, to perſuade or incline, that they have generally the contrary effect. It would be much to the advantage of many lawgivers and other perſons in authority, if they would carefully diſtinguiſh between what is to be effected by force, and what by perſuaſion, and never prepoſterouſly mix theſe oppoſite principles, and defeat the operation of both. Laws and authority compel; but it is reaſon and intereſt that muſt perſuade.

The fixing of prices by authority, is not only impolitic, as I have ſhewn above, but it is in itſelf unreaſonable and abſurd. There are ſo many different circumſtances to be taken in to conſtitute equality or juſtice in ſuch matters, that they cannot be all attended to, or even aſcertained. The plenty of one kind of proviſion, and ſcarcity of ano-

ther—The plenty in one corner of the country, and ſcarcity in another—The diſtance of one place, and nearneſs of another—The changes of circumſtances in the courſe of a few weeks or days—Good or bad roads, or good or bad weather—The comparative quality of the goods—Theſe, and an hundred other circumſtances which can never be foreſeen, actually govern the prices of goods at market, and ought to govern them. If a price is juſt to one who brings his goods fifteen miles, it is certainly too much for one who brings them only one. If ten pence per pound is a juſt price for veal at preſent, I am certain it muſt be too much a month hence, when veal will be much more plentiful. If one ſhilling and four pence per pound is reaſonable for a fat turkey, ought not I to have more for a fatter, which is better both in its quality and weight—being lighter to its bulk, becauſe fat is not ſo heavy as either lean fleſh or bones. If it is reaſonable to pay me one ſhilling per pound for any meat in a good day, I ſhall expect more if I go out in a ſtorm; if not, I will ſtay at home on a bad day, and ſo you muſt ſtarve one week, and pamper the next.

All theſe circumſtances you muſt allow to reſtrain and limit one another. He who is neareſt, and has goods in plenty, will by ſelling cheap, moderate the demands of him who comes far. If you pay very dear for any article one day, the news of that ſpreading abroad, brings in prodigious quantities, and the price falls, and ſo it happens in every other caſe. Thus it appears that it is out of your power to tell what is a reaſonable price, and by at

tempting to do it, you not only refuse the expectation of the people, but you treat them with injustice.

I have one more remark to make upon this subject; that to fix the prices of goods, especially provisions in a market, is as impracticable as it is unreasonable. The whole persons concerned, buyers and sellers, will use every art to defeat it, and will certainly succeed. — — — —

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ADDRESS

TO

GENERAL WASHINGTON.

THE Preſident and Faculty of the College of New Jerſey, beg leave to embrace this opportunity of congratulating your Excellency on the preſent happy and promiſing ſtate of public affairs; and of ſincerely wiſhing you proſperity and ſucceſs in the enſuing campaign, and in what may yet remain of the important conflict in which the United States are engaged.

As this College, devoted to the intereſts of religion and learning, was among the firſt places of America, that ſuffered from the ravages of the enemy—ſo, happily, this place and neighbourhood was the ſcene of one of the moſt important and ſeaſonable checks which they received in their progreſs. The ſurpriſe of the Heſſians at Trenton, and the ſubſequent victory at Princeton, redounded much to the honour of the commander who planned, and the handful of troops which executed the meaſures; yet were they even of greater moment to the cauſe of America, than they were brilliant as particular military exploits.

We contemplate and adore the wiſdom and good-

neſs of divine Providence, as diſplayed in favour of the United States, in many inſtances during the courſe of the war; but in none more than in the unanimous appointment of your Excellency to the command of the army. When we conſider the continuance of your life and health—the diſcernment, prudence, fortitude, and patience of your conduct, by which you have not only ſacrificed as others have done, perſonal eaſe and property, but frequently even reputation itſelf, in the public cauſe, chuſing rather to riſque your own name than expoſe the nakedneſs of your country—when we conſider the great and growing attachment of the army, and the cordial eſteem of all ranks of men, and of every ſtate in the Union, which you have ſo long enjoyed—we cannot help being of opinion, that God himſelf has raiſed you up as a fit and proper inſtrument for eſtabliſhing and ſecuring the liberty and happineſs of theſe States.

We pray that the Almighty may continue to protect and bleſs you—that the late ſignal ſucceſs of the American arms, may pave the way to a ſpeedy and laſting peace; and that, having ſurvived ſo much fatigue, and ſo many dangers, you may enjoy many years of honourable repoſe in the boſom of your grateful country.

JOHN WITHERSPOON.

Memorial and Manifesto

OF THE

UNITED STATES

OF

NORTH-AMERICA,

TO THE MEDIATING POWERS IN THE CONFERENCES FOR PEACE, TO THE OTHER POWERS IN EUROPE, AND IN GENERAL TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THE SAME.

THE United States of North-America, having been made acquainted, by their illuſtrious ally the king of France, that there is a propoſal for holding a Congreſs under the mediation of the empreſs of Ruſſia, and the emperor of Germany, to treat of terms of accommodation with Great Britain, have thought proper to publiſh, for the information of all concerned, the following memorial, which ſhall contain a brief detail of the ſteps by which they have been brought into their preſent intereſting and critical ſituation.

The United States (formerly Britiſh colonies) were firſt planted and ſettled by emigrants from that country. Theſe ſettlers came out at different times, and with different views. Some were actuated by the ſpirit of curioſity and enterpriſe, which was ſo prevalent in Europe in the ſixteenth and

seven^n^teenth centuries; some were chiefly induced by the hope of riches; and some were driven from their native country by the iron rod of sacerdotal tyranny. They solicited their charters, and settled their governments on different principles, such as best pleased those who were chiefly concerned in each undertaking. In one thing, however, they all agreed, that they considered themselves as bringing their liberty with them, and as entitled to all the rights and privileges of freemen under the British constitution.

Pursuant to these sentiments, they looked upon it as the foundation stone of British liberty, that the freeholders or proprietors of the soil, should have the exclusive right of granting money for public uses, and therefore invariably proceeded upon this plan. With respect, indeed, to the whole of their internal government, they considered themselves as not directly subject to the British parliament, but as separate *independent* dominions under the same sovereign, and with similar co-ordinate jurisdiction. It appears from several events, that happened in the course of their history, and from public acts of some of their governments, that this was their opinion many years before the late unjust claims and oppressive acts, which gave birth to the bloody conflict not yet finished.

From the first settlement of the colonies, they willingly submitted to Britain's enjoying an exclusive right to their commerce; though several of the acts of the British parliament upon this subject, they always looked upon as partial and unjust. Some of these appear, at first view, to be such

badges of ſervitude, that it is ſurpriſing that a free people ſhould ever have been patient under them. The truth is, they would not probably have been ſubmitted to, but that the rigid execution of them at this diſtance was in its nature impoſſible.

It was always the opinion of the inhabitants of theſe ſtates, that the benefits which aroſe to Britain from the excluſive commerce of America, and the taxes which it enabled her to raiſe on her own ſubjects, was more than their proportion of the common treaſure neceſſary to the defence of the empire. At the ſame time, great as it was, the loſs to them, by being confined in their trade, was greater than the benefit to her; as it obliged them to purchaſe any thing they had occaſion for from her, and at her own price, which neceſſarily retarded their growth and improvement. All this notwithſtanding, when any extraordinary emergency ſeemed to render it neceſſary, and when application was regularly made to the aſſemblies of the colonies, they complied in every inſtance with the requiſitions, and made advances of ſums which, in one or two inſtances, Britain herſelf conſidered as above their ability, and therefore made reſtitution or compenſation for them.

The true reaſon of this long and patient acquieſcence, was the natural and warm attachment which the inhabitants of America had to Great Britain, as their parent country. They gloried in their relation to her; they were zealous for her honour and intereſt; imbibed her principles and prejudices with reſpect to other nations; entered into her quarrels, and were profuſe of their blood for the purpoſe of

ſecuring or extending her dominion. Almoſt every city and county in Great Britain had its counter part, which bore its name in the new world; and thoſe whoſe progenitors for three generations had been born in America, when they ſpoke of going to Britain, called it going home.

Such was the ſtate of things, when ſome unwiſe counſellors to the Britiſh king, thought of raiſing a revenue without the conſent of the American legiſlatures, to be carried directly to the Engliſh treaſury. The firſt eſſay on this ſubject was the famous ſtamp act, of which we ſhall at preſent ſay nothing, but that the univerſal ferment raiſed on occaſion of it was a clear proof of the juſtneſs and truth of the preceding repreſentation. So odious was it over the whole country, and ſo dangerous to thoſe who attempted to carry it into execution, that in a ſhort time it was repealed by themſelves. Parliament, however, by their declaratory act, which paſſed in the ſame ſeſſion, ſhewed that they intended to maintain the right, though they deſiſted in this inſtance from the exerciſe of it. The Americans overjoyed at the immediate deliverance, returned to their affection and attachment, hoping that the claim would again become dormant, and that no occaſion would be given for the future diſcuſſion of it.

But it was not long before the Engliſh miniſtry propoſed and carried an act of parliament, impoſing duties on tea, glaſs, &c. which by the ſmallneſs of the duties themſelves, and ſeveral other circumſtances, was plainly deſigned to ſteal upon us gradually, and if poſſible imperceptibly, the exerciſe of their pretended right. It was not, however, in their

power to blind the colonies, who roſe up againſt the execution of this act, with a zeal proportioned to the importance of the ſubject, and with an unanimity not to be expected but where a great and common danger keeps every cauſe of jealouſy and diſſention out of view. Not only every colony, by its repreſentative body, but every county, and almoſt every corporation or other ſubordinate diviſion, publicly declared that they would defend their liberty at the riſk of their eſtates and lives. In the meanwhile the Engliſh government profeſſed a determination equally firm to enforce the execution of this act by military power, and bring us to unconditional ſubmiſſion.

Thus did the rupture take place; and as to the juſtice of our cauſe, we muſt ſay, that if any impartial perſons will read the declaratory act, that the lords and commons of Great Britain in parliament, have a right to make laws binding upon the colonies *in all caſes whatſoever*, and which was now producing its proper fruit, he muſt be convinced, that had we ſubmitted to it, we ſhould have been in no reſpect different from a ſet of conquered tributary ſtates, ſubject to a foreign country; and the colonial aſſemblies would have become both uſeleſs and contemptible. The writings in England upon this ſubject, proving that we were repreſented *in Middleſex*, and uſing many other equally forcible arguments, are and will remain a diſgrace to reaſon, as well as an inſult on American underſtanding.

At this period of time not only the people of England in general, but the king of England in his ſpeeches, and his parliament in their addreſſes,

affected to repreſent the commotions in America as raiſed by a few ſeditious perſons, and the conſequence of a pre-concerted ſcheme to throw off the dominion of Great Britain, and ſet up an independent empire. This unjuſt and indeed abſurd accuſation may be refuted by a thouſand arguments. The ſtrong predelection of the people of America for the people, the faſhions and the government of Britain, proves its falſehood. There was no perſon, nor any number of perſons in any ſtate of America, who had ſuch influence as to be able to effect this, or even view it as a probable object of ambition. But what muſt demonſtrate the abſurdity of this ſuppoſition, is the ſtate in which America was found when ſhe began to grapple with the power of Britain. No ſtep had been taken to open the way for obtaining foreign aid. No proviſion had been made of arms, ammunition, or warlike ſtores of any kind; ſo that the country ſeemed to be expoſed, naked and helpleſs, to the dominion of her enemy.

Agreeably to this, addreſſes and petitions were the means to which we had recourſe. Reconciliation to Britain, with the ſecurity and preſervation of our rights, was the wiſh of every ſoul. The moſt explicit profeſſions of loyalty to the prince, and the moſt expreſs aſſurances of effectual ſupport in his government, if we were called on in a conſtitutional way, made the ſubſtance of our declarations. Every ſucceeding petition, however, was treated with new and greater inſult, and was anſwered by acts of parliament, which for their cruelty will be a ſtain upon the annals of the kingdom, and bring the character of the nation itſelf into diſgrace.

Single acts of inhumanity may be accounted for from the depravity of an individual; but what shall we say of grave and numerous assemblies, enacting such laws as the Boston port-bill, which reduced at once so many people to beggary, and their property itself to nothing—the act permitting those charged with murdering Americans, to be sent to England to be tried, that is to say, either not to be tried at all, or certainly absolved—the act appointing Americans taken at sea, to be turned before the mast in English ships, and obliged either to kill their own relations, or be killed by them—and the act appointing American prisoners to be sent to the East Indies as slaves. But what is of all most astonishing is, that they never failed to extol their own lenity, when passing such acts as filled this whole continent with resentment and horror. To crown the whole, the last petition sent by Congress to the king, which beseeched him to appoint *some mode* by which our complaints might be remedied, and a way be paved for reconciliation, was treated with absolute contempt, and no answer given to it of any kind. Thus was all intercourse broken up. We were declared rebels; and they themselves must confess, that no alternative was left us, but either to go with ropes about our necks, and submit ourselves, not to the king, but to the kingdom of England, to be trampled under foot, or risk all the consequences of open and vigorous resistance.

The last part of the alternative we chose without hesitation; and as it was impossible to preserve civil order any longer under the name and form of a government which we had taken arms to oppose, we

found it absolutely necessary to declare ourselves independent of that prince who had thrown us out of his protection. This great step was taken with the full approbation, and indeed at the ardent desire of the public at large. The extent and growth of the colonies seemed, in the nature of things, to call for such a separation long before; yet it would not probably have happened for many years, if it had not been forced upon us by the conduct of our unkind parent herself.—The thing indeed seems to have been the purpose of God Almighty; for every measure of the court of Great Britain had the most direct tendency to hasten, and render it unavoidable.

We must take notice, that before the declaration of independence, there was something like an attempt to reconcile us, commonly called Lord North's conciliatory motion; but it was so trifling in its nature, and insidious in its form, that probably no success was expected from it, even by those who contrived it. Who does not perceive in it an artful attempt to divide us? and that while every thing else is left in the greatest uncertainty, the main point for which we contended is clearly decided against us?

After the declaration of independence, Lord and General Howe brought out a commission for *giving peace to America*. But as they had not liberty so much as to acknowledge us by an open treaty, so the substance of what they offered was pardon upon submission; that the parliament would revise the acts they had passed, and if any of them were found improper, they would amend them: which, in one word, amounted to this, that they would do for *us* what they *themselves* thought good. These offers,

however, poor as they were, came too late. So important a ſtep as the declaration of independence, could not be recalled; and the formidable armament ſent out againſt us in the year 1776, rendered it more neceſſary than ever.

We are ſorry to be obliged to take notice of the manner of conducting the war. It would be for the honour of humanity, that it could be buried in oblivion. Many were the inſtances of perſons, after they had ſubmitted and begged mercy on their knees, being murdered in cold blood. The treatment of priſoners was from the beginning, and has continued through the war, with ſome exceptions, ſavage and barbarous to the laſt degree. Multitudes, before any exchange took place, died by famine and ſtench. Many were, by threatening and ill uſage, conſtrained to enliſt in their enemy's ſervice; and many were forced on board their ſhips of war, or ſent to Britain to rot in priſon, at a diſtance from their friends, without hope of relief. It is not eaſy to enumerate the houſes and even towns which have been wantonly burnt, or to deſcribe the devaſtation of the country, and robbery of the inhabitants, wherever the army paſſed. To this may be added, hiring the ſavages to come upon the back ſettlements. There is the greater ſhame in this expedient, that they are not formidable either for their number or their valour, but for the ſhocking manner in which they torture their priſoners, and murder women and infants who fall into their hands. Civilized nations will perhaps find it hard to believe this repreſentation; but every part of it can be ſupported by the moſt unqueſtionable facts, and it is rendered credible not only by the circumſtance that ci-

vil wars are carried on commonly with a rancour and animoſity greater than thoſe between independent nations, but by the expreſſions of hatred and contempt which have been uſed with reſpect to the Americans, by almoſt every ſpeaker and writer in England. What effect could ſuch language have on the minds of the ſoldiery, but to ſteel them againſt all impreſſions of pity and tenderneſs, as we find was really the caſe, till they were reſtrained in ſome degree, by the fear of retaliation upon their people in our hands.

At laſt after four years of real, and near two years of profeſſed and declared independence, it pleaſed God to incline the heart of the king of France to give relief to the oppreſſed, by entering into a treaty with the United States, on the moſt liberal and diſintereſted principles. No excluſive privileges are there ſtipulated for the French nation, but the ſecure, open, and equal intercourſe to which all other nations are invited. This acknowledgment and ſupport from one of the moſt powerful monarchs in Europe, it may eaſily be ſuppoſed, gave a new turn to our affairs, and a new dignity to our cauſe. The terms of this treaty ſo favourable to us, as well as honourable to our ally, cannot fail to add the bond of gratitude to that of juſtice, and make our adherence to it inviolable.

Not long after this treaty was ſigned, the court and parliament of Great Britain ſent out commiſſioners to make an offer of terms, which we readily confeſs were not only as good, but better, than what three years before would have been chearfully accepted. But the ground was now wholly chan-

ged. We were offered freedom from taxes, and even a ſpecies of independence itſelf, upon the *eaſy* terms of breaking our faith ſo lately pledged, and uniting our force with that of Great Britain; and both would doubtleſs have been immediately employed in taking vengeance on France for the aſſiſtance ſhe had lent to us in our diſtreſs. Yet even here, the whole was to be ſubject to the reviſion of parliament; that is to ſay, any part of the agreement might be approved or rejected as to the wiſdom of that aſſembly ſhould ſeem meet.

Theſe laſt propoſals from Great Britain, deſerve very particular notice. They are a clear dereliction of the firſt cauſe of quarrel, and an ample confeſſion that the demands of America were juſt; while the time and circumſtances of their being made, ſhew that they could not be accepted with any regard either to juſtice, gratitude, or policy. Could we be guilty of a direct breach of faith, when the ink was hardly dry by which our ratification of the treaty was marked? Could we inſtantly forget thoſe favours which had been ſo earneſtly ſolicited, as well as generouſly beſtowed? Could we, who had not entered into a league offenſive and defenſive with France, except for the preſent ſtruggle in our own behalf, becauſe we did not wiſh to be involved in the wars of Europe, throw ourſelves into the arms of an hoſtile nation, and promiſe to make peace or war with her, againſt our benefactors?

Upon the whole, ſince the American colonies were, from their extent and ſituation, ripe for a ſeparation from Great Britain, and the nature of things ſeemed to demand it; ſince their growing

power, added to that of Great Britain, would give her such a dominion of the sea, as must be dangerous to the liberty and commerce of other nations; since, by her own acts of oppression, she has alienated the minds of the Americans, and compelled them to establish independent governments, which have now taken place; and since these governments, which are distinct though confederated, wholly settled upon republican principles, and fit only for agriculture and commerce, cannot be an object of jealousy to other powers, but by free and open intercourse with them a general benefit to all; it is to be hoped that the revolution which they have effected, will meet with universal approbation.

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ON THE

CONTEST

BETWEEN

GREAT BRITAIN AND AMERICA.

PHILADELPHIA, *Sept.* 3, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR very acceptable letter of the 21ſt of March, I received about the middle of June, and would have anſwered it long ago, if there had been any encouraging proſpect of conveying it ſafely. As to writing you a ſhort letter that muſt have gone open through the enemy's poſts, I did not think it worth while. I have, however, now come to a reſolution of writing you pretty fully, and trying to convey it by France or Holland; and if it ſhould fall into their hands, and never get to your's, there will be no other loſs than my time in writing; for as to any other conſequences, either to the public or to myſelf, I have not the leaſt apprehenſion.

Your letter came to me ſealed, and apparently never opened, in a packet from the Britiſh commiſſioners, which arrived at York-town while the Congreſs was ſitting; and conſequently it, as well

as one from Mr F——, was delivered to me in preſence of the whole members. As the ſame packet, beſides the public meſſage, contained ſome private letters addreſſed to particular members, ſome of them from Governor Johnſtone, one of the commiſſioners, a propoſal was made by a member, who read publicly one received by himſelf, that every gentleman who had received private letters from any perſon with the enemy, ſhould deliver them to Congreſs, that they might be read. This would have been attended with no difficulty as to me; except ſome family affairs in Mr F——'s letter very improper to be publicly read, and ſome expreſſions in his letter a little offenſive ſpeaking of Congreſs. However, it was not done at that time; and afterwards, in a diet at many days diſtance, every member who had received any ſuch letters, was called upon to read from them what related to public affairs, which was done.

I am and have been greatly concerned, as you ſeem to be, for the conteſt between Great Britain and America; and certainly, from my own intereſt, have by far the greateſt reaſon of the two; and as I ſuppoſe, it will be agreeable to you, ſhall make a few obſervations. 1. Upon the public cauſe; and, 2. On my own conduct, which I underſtand from many different quarters, to be highly blamed in my native country.

As to the public cauſe, I look upon the ſeparation of America from Britain to be the viſible intention of Providence; and believe, that in the iſſue it will be to the benefit of this country, without any injury to the other—perhaps to the advan-

tage of both. It ſeems to me the intention of Providence for many reaſons, which I cannot now enumerate, but in a particular manner for the following—that I cannot recollect any inſtance in hiſtory, in which a perſon or people have ſo totally and uniformly miſtaken the means for attaining their own ends, as the king and parliament of Britain have in this conteſt. I do ſeriouſly and poſitively affirm to you, my dear Sir, that it is my opinion, that Congreſs itſelf, if they had been to direct the meaſures of the Britiſh miniſtry, could not, or would not, have directed them to meaſures ſo effectual to forward and eſtabliſh the independence of America, as thoſe which they choſe of their own accord. They have had a miſtaken opinion of the ſtate of things in America, from the beginning to this hour, and have founded their whole conduct upon their miſtakes. They ſuppoſed ſometimes, that the people of America, in general, were ſeditious and factious—deſirous of a ſeparation from Great Britain, and that their conduct on occaſion of the ſtamp-act was the effect of this diſpoſition. Nothing could be more untrue. I am a witneſs that the people of this country had an eſteem of, and attachment to the people of Great Britain, exceedingly ſtrong. They were proud of them, and of their own deſcent from them. Britiſh faſhions, Britiſh goods, and even Britiſh perſons, were in the higheſt eſteem. A perſon educated in the old counties had a degree of rank and credit from that circumſtance, independent of every other. I think they were even partial in this reſpect. I believe, had I myſelf been born and educated in America, I

ſhould have met with a degree of acceptance and ſucceſs in my ſtation, far inferior to what actually happened. When an American ſpoke of going to England, he always called it going home; and wherever you are in this country, you meet with almoſt nothing but counties, townſhips, and houſes, called by Engliſh names. I live at Princeton in Middleſex county; and on the oppoſite ſide of the ſtreet is Somerſet county, and indeed, I believe all the counties in New Jerſey, are called by Engliſh names.

From this I deſire that you may infer, that the oppoſition made to the claims of parliament, aroſe from a deep and univerſal conviction in the people, that they were inconſiſtent with their own ſecurity and peace. In this I am ſatisfied that they judged right; for had the claim ſet up been acquieſced in, the provincial aſſemblies would have become contemptible and uſeleſs, and the whole colonies no better than a parcel of tributary ſtates, which, placed at ſo great a diſtance, would have been, from error, ignorance, and ſelf-intereſt, loaded in the moſt inſupportable manner.

Another miſtake, into which the miniſtry and parliament of England fell, was, that this was a deep-laid ſcheme of a few artful and deſigning men, who ſtirred up the multitude for their own ends; that the ſentiments in favour of America, were by no means general; but that the artful leaders impoſed upon them. This I have ſeen aſſerted from the beginning to the end of the quarrel; and to complete the abſurdity, the very commiſſioners

now here from Britain, continue to reaſon in the ſame manner—impeach the Congreſs with ambitious and deſigning views, and ſeem diſpoſed to appeal to the people. Alas! they know nothing of the matter. The Congreſs is a changeable body: members are going from it, and coming to it every month, nay, every week. — —

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ON THE

AFFAIRS

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

TUSCULUM, NEAR PRINCETON,
March 20. 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received a letter from you, dated June 11, 1778, a few days after I had written to you a long letter of the date, Sept. 21. that year. The design of it was to desire me to enquire after, and endeavour to procure the enlargement of one Alexander Muirhead, supposed to be carried into Boston. I immediately wrote to Boston myself, and caused one of the delegates of that state also to write; but we could hear nothing of him, so that probably he was not carried into that place.

Your favour of March 19, 1779, acknowledging the receipt of mine of the 21st of September preceding, I received in the month of August last year. I am to blame in not answering it sooner; but I had no inclination to send an open letter through the English posts, and any proper opportunity of sending it another way seldom occurs. This goes by a gentleman who means to get to Europe

upon buſineſs, and has promiſed to take particular care of it; ſo that I mean to embrace the opportunity of writing to you and ſome other of my friends. I am obliged to you for your particular private home news about Glaſgow, and would be glad of the continuance of ſuch intelligence, and the more ſo, if you would take in Paiſley alſo.

I have been, ſince I wrote you laſt, in general in good health, and indeed am at preſent in better health than I have been ſince I had the laſt fit. Excepting theſe fits, and the weakneſs that followed upon them, my health has been good ever ſince I came to America; and that weakneſs has been chiefly a ſwimming in my head, and fear and uncertainty when I went to make a long diſcourſe in public. It was the opinion of Dr. Ruſh, that theſe fits were ſomething of the appoplectic kind. It is remarkable, that for theſe twelve months paſt, I have had almoſt conſtantly a ſucceſſion of pimples, or rather ſmall biles or blotches, about the temples, within the hair and ſometimes on the forehead; ſince which time I have been ſenſibly better and freer from the other complaint.

I have now left Congreſs, not being able to ſupport the expenſe of attending it, with the frequent journies to Princeton, and being determined to give particular attention to the revival of the college. Profeſſor Houſton, however, our profeſſor of mathematics, is a delegate this year; but he tells me he will certainly leave it next November. I mention this circumſtance to confirm what I believe I wrote you formerly, that the members of Congreſs in general, not only receive no profit from that office,

but I believe five out of ſix of them, if not more, are great loſers in their private affairs. This cannot be otherwiſe; for as none of the delegates are allowed to have any lucrative office whatever, either in their own ſtate or for the United States, though their expenſes ſhould be fully borne, their time is taken up, and their own private eſtates are neglected. At the end of the year 1778, I gave notice to our legiſlature that they muſt either not chuſe me at all, or leave me at full liberty to attend only when I could conveniently. They choſe me however, and I made a good deal of uſe of that liberty in the year 1779; and this year all the delegates were changed but one, who had only been in one year, and who has not a houſe to go home to, his eſtate being in the neighbourhood of New York.

My family are well ſo far as I know. The truſtees of the college have laſt September choſe my ſon-in-law, Mr. Smith, profeſſor of moral philoſophy. He came to Princeton with his family in December. To him I gave up my houſe at college, and devolved upon him the whole buſineſs of boarding young gentlemen, and retired to my houſe in the country, at the diſtance of one mile, and in full ſight of Princeton. This I have had in view for ſome years, and intend to ſpend the remainder of my life, if poſſible, *in otio cum dignitate.* You know I was always fond of being a ſcientific farmer. That diſpoſition has not loſt but gathered ſtrength ſince my being in America. In this reſpect I got a dreadful ſtroke indeed from the Engliſh when they were here, they having ſeized and moſtly deſtroyed my whole ſtock, and committed ſuch rava-

ges that we are not yet fully recovered from it. My (now) eldeſt ſon ſailed in October laſt for France, with Mr. Girard and Mr. Jay, late preſident of Congreſs. He is to purchaſe a few medicines and inſtruments in Europe, and return to proſecute his buſineſs as a phyſician. My other ſon was ſtudying law; but for the mean while, is private ſecretary to the preſent preſident of Congreſs, and my youngeſt daughter is at home.

As to public affairs, it ſeems to be yet uncertain whether we ſhall have peace ſoon. Greatly do I and many others in America deſire it; and yet, were our condition ten times worſe than it is, nothing ſhort of the clear independence of this country would be accepted. I obſerve, by your letter of the 19th of March laſt year, that you had a high opinion of your ſucceſſes at St. Lucia, in Georgia, and againſt the French trade. I believe before the end of the campaign, there was little reaſon to boaſt of your ſucceſs upon the whole. I mentioned to you in my laſt how obſtinately the court of England continued in erroneous opinions reſpecting America; and now I think that obſtinacy has become incurable. It is plain that they ſtill harp upon the ſame ſtring, that a few leading men in Congreſs ſtir up the people, and perſuade them to continue the conteſt. Allow me to aſſure you, that this is one of the moſt abſurd and groundleſs opinions that ever was formed. The Congreſs is changing every day. There is no inſtance in the whole conteſt, in which the public opinion did not go before their reſolutions. To go back to the very beginning—the declaration of independence was forced upon the ma-

jority of the then Congreſs, by the people in general: and, in conſequence of ſubſequent elections, every ſix months that I have been in Congreſs has weakened the party that was ſuſpected of coldneſs upon that ſubject; and now, perhaps, I may ſay it is annihilated.

I have read lately your parliamentary enquiry into the cauſes of your want of ſucceſs in America. The examination of Galloway in particular is a curioſity. I know that he and ſuch as he are blinded and ſtupified to an almoſt incredible degree, by their prejudices; and yet it is hard to ſuppoſe that he thought as he ſaid in all points. For example, when he endeavours to make it be believed, that the difficulty of ſupplying general Waſhington's army aroſe from the diſaffection of the country to his cauſe. I admit that he was in the winter 1777, in a part of the country where there are more people either cool or diſaffected to the cauſe of America, than in any other on the continent; and yet his want of ſupplies did not ariſe from that in the leaſt degree. It aroſe from the ſtate of our money. If he and his commiſſaries had had as much hard money as general Howe, he would have had all the proviſions in the country laid down at his tent door.

I am not only fully ſenſible, by a general knowledge of the country in this and other ſtates, that the public mind is entirely on the ſide of liberty, and for the independence of America—but I could mention a great many facts and circumſtances as evidences of it, ſtronger than could well be imagined, and indeed which have turned out ſtronger than even my expectations. One circumſtance is

alone decisive upon this subject, which is well known to yourselves, that the moment your army leaves any part of the country, it is not only lost to you, but returns so strongly to the interest of Congress, that all the persons known to have been attached to you are obliged to fly with terror and confusion. But there is another strong circumstance, the universal attachment of the people to the French alliance. In vain have your partisans endeavoured to alarm the people with the fears of popery and arbitrary power. It makes not the least impression even upon the common people.

Please to attend to the circumstance I am going to mention; because it surprised myself when I observed it. There are always, you know, little feuds and contentions, jealousy and emulation, in every society and in every association; both in Congress and in the country, I have observed that when one set or faction wants to make the other odious, they charge them with being cold to the French alliance, and ungrateful to them for their services. This, to my knowledge, has been the subject of mutual reproaches, when I do not believe there was any truth in it on either side. Would you think it—some have seriously attempted to persuade me, that the New-England delegates were cold to the French, and inclined to the English; to which I answered, that I well knew the contrary, but that they were of an independent spirit, and would not easily submit to unwarrantable influence, either from the French or the English. I mention all this singly with this view, to shew you the bent and inclination of the public mind.

I have been lately reading over governor Johnston's ſpeech after his return, in which to my amazement, he poſitively and publicly denies his having ſent any meſſage by a lady to Mr. Reed. The thing is now publicly known and confeſſed. He ſays they would have named the lady if there had been any ſuch thing. Mr. Reed forbore naming the lady out of tenderneſs to her; but it has now come out. It was Mrs .F——, daughter of the late Dr. G——, married to Mr. F——, ſon of R. F———, of———. What ſhould people think of perſons of his character ſo boldly and ſolemnly to deny a certain fact.

I will mention another circumſtance to you. The diſtreſs of this country by the depreciation of the money, has been very great. Many have ſuffered great loſſes; not a few have been utterly ruined. Yet I never could perceive that this altered the inclination of the people as to the public cauſe in the leaſt. Nay, notwithſtanding the dreadful complaints made againſt particular claſſes of men, ſuch as foreſtallers and engroſſers, commiſſaries and quartermaſters, yet I am perſuaded that any body who ſhould but propoſe to return to ſubmiſſion to England for relief from their depredations, would be torn in pieces. — — — —
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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

IMPROVEMENT OF AMERICA.

NORTH AMERICA is at preſent from the natural courſe of things, in a growing ſtate. It will therefore of itſelf, for a ſeries of years gradually improve. There are however many things by which that improvement may be facilitated or retarded; and it is the laudable purpoſe of this ſociety, to attend to theſe circumſtances with care, and uſe their utmoſt endeavours to encourage the one and to remove the other. Having had the honour of being admitted a member of this ſociety, and not having it much in my power any otherwiſe to promote American improvements, I could not reſiſt the inclination I felt to digeſt and put in writing, a few reflections upon the police of countries in general, the great principles on which the Philadelphia Society ought to proceed, and perhaps I may propoſe ſome particular regulations.

1. The moral cauſes of the proſperity of a country, are almoſt infinitely more powerful than thoſe that are only occaſional. This obſervation is taken from Monteſquieu, by whom it is admirably illuſtrated, and it ought never to be out of view, with

thoſe who wiſh to promote the general good. The moral cauſes ariſe from the nature of the government, including the adminiſtration of juſtice, liberty of conſcience, the partition of property. The riſe of a particular town, the cultivation and beauty of a particular quarter of a country, may ſometimes be juſtly aſcribed to the ſurpriſing effects of a ſingle perſon who ſet the example; yet he was only the occaſion properly ſpeaking, of the vigorous exertion. The conſequences could never be general or laſting, if there was not a diſpoſition to it in the conſtitution of the country. Therefore, a ſacred regard ſhould be had by every lover of mankind, to the principles of equity and liberty, that they may never be violated by any public proceedings. Pennſylvania is ſo happy in this particular, that its conſtitution need not be improved, but preſerved and defended.

2. It is extremely difficult, after you depart from general principles, to diſcover what particular regulations will be for the intereſt of a country. It requires a very comprehenſive mind, and a thorough knowledge of the courſe of trade and police in general. Beſides, it is not only difficult, but impoſſible to foreſee what circumſtances may afterwards occur. Many things are uſeful and expedient at one time, which in a few years become unneceſſary or hurtful. Nay, many ſelfiſh laws have operated from the beginning, in a manner directly contrary to what was expected. The incorporation of trades in the cities in Britain, is an inſtance of the firſt: and almoſt every law made to the prejudice of Ireland, is an example of the laſt. — — — — — — — — — —

SUPPLICATION

OF

J. R********.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY HENRY LAURENS, ESQUIRE, PRESIDENT, AND OTHER, THE MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE, THE AMERICAN CONGRESS, &c. &c. &c.

THE HUMBLE REPRESENTATION AND EARNEST SUPPLICATION OF *J. R* ——PRINTER AND BOOKSELLER IN NEW-YORK,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,

THAT a great part of the Britiſh forces has already left this city, and from many ſymptoms there is reaſon to ſuſpect, that the remainder will ſpeedily follow them. Where they are gone or going, is perhaps known to themſelves, perhaps not; certainly however, it is unknown to us, the loyal inhabitants of the place, and other friends of government who have taken refuge in it, and who are therefore filled with diſtreſs and terror on the unhappy occaſion.

That as ſoon as the evacuation is completed, it is more than probable, the city will be taken poſſeſſion of by the forces of your high mightineſſes, followed by vaſt crowds of other perſons—whigs by nature and profeſſion—friends to the liberties, and foes to the enemies of America. Above all, it will undoubtedly be filled with ſhoals of Yankies, that is

to ſay, the natives and inhabitants (or as a great lady in this metropolis generally expreſſes it, the *wretches*) of New England.

That from ſeveral circumſtances, there is reaſon to fear that the behaviour of the wretches aforeſaid, may not be altogether gentle to ſuch of the friends of government as ſhall ſtay behind. What the governing powers of the ſtate of New York may do alſo, it is impoſſible to foretel. Nay, who knows but we may ſoon ſee, *in propria perſona*, as we have often heard of *Hortentius*, the governor of New Jerſey, a gentleman remarkable for ſeverely handling thoſe whom he calls traitors, and indeed who has exalted ſome of them (quanquam animus meminiſſe horret lectuque refugit) to a high, though dependant ſtation, and brought *America under their feet*, in a ſenſe very different from what Lord North meant when he firſt uſed that celebrated expreſſion.

That your petitioner in particular, is at the greateſt loſs what to reſolve upon, or how to ſhape his courſe. He has no deſire at all, either to be roaſted in Florida, or frozen to death in Canada or Nova Scotia. Being a great lover of freſh cod, he has had thoughts of trying a ſettlement in Newfoundland, but recollecting that the New England men have almoſt all the ſame appetite, he was obliged to relinquiſh that project entirely. If he ſhould go to Great Britain, dangers no leſs formidable preſent themſelves. Having been a bankrupt in London, it is not impoſſible that he might be accommodated with a lodging in Newgate, and that the ordinary

there, might oblige him to say his prayers, a practice from which he hath had an insuperable aversion all his life long.

In this dreadful dilemma, he hath at last determined to apply to your high mightinesses, and by this memorial to *lay himself at your feet*, which he assures you, is the true modish phrase for respectful submission, according to the present etiquette of the court. Being informed however, that some of you are Presbyterians and Religionists, he has been also at some pains to find out a scripture warrant or example for his present conduct, and has happily found it, in the advice given by the servants of Benhadad, king of Syria, to their master, 1 Kings xx. 31. *And his servants said unto him, behold now we have heard that the kings of Israel are merciful kings: Let us we pray thee, put sackcloth upon our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel, peradventure he may save thy life. So they girded sackcloth upon their loins, and put ropes upon their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Benhadad saith, I pray thee let me live.* In like manner, O most mighty and venerable Congress-men, your servant J. R——— saith, I pray you let me live.

Having thus preferred my petition, I must now intreat leave to lay before your high mightinesses, sundry reasons, which I hope will incline you to lend a favourable ear to it, in doing which, I shall, use all possible plainness and candour.

I. In the first place, there cannot possibly be any danger to the United States, in suffering me to live. I know many of you think and say that a Tory heart

acquires such a degree of sourness and malevolence, in addition to its native stock, and such a habit of treachery, by breaking through the most endearing ties of nature, that no good can be expected from it, nor any dependance placed upon it, let pretences or appearances be what they will. I remember also, about seven years ago a certain person hearing accidently one or two paragraphs read from the writings of an eminent controversial divine in this country, said, That fellow must be a turn-coat; it is impossible that he could have been educated in the profession which he now defends. What is your reason for that opinion? said another gentleman who was present—Because, says he, he discovers a rancour of spirit and rottenness of heart, unattainable by any other class of men. But I contend that these remarks relate only to the natives of this country, who like parricides took up arms for her destruction; and to apostates in religion; neither of which, I am certain, can be applied to me. I was born, as is well known, in old England; and as for the accusation of apostacy, I set it at defiance, unless a man can be said to fall off from what he was never on, or to depart from a place which he never saw.

But what I beg of you particularly to observe is, that let the disposition to mischief be as great as you please, where the ability is wanting there can be no danger. I have often seen the lions in the tower of London without fear, because there was an iron grate between me and them. Now it is certain that the Tories in general, would do any thing sooner than fight. Many of them became Tories for no other reason, than that they might avoid fighting.

The poor chicken-hearted creatures cried out to the potent King of England, to take them under his wings for protection, which he endeavoured to do, but they were too short to cover them. Even the late petition for arms in which they promised to go without the lines, and sweep you all away with the besom of destruction, was but an idle rhodomontade—It was something like a poor boy shouting and singing in the dark, to keep himself from being afraid. At that very time, to my certain knowledge they would have given the world for a place to fly to, out of the reach of Washington and Gates. But I return to myself, *egomet sum proximus mihi.* I can assure your high mightinesses, that no danger can arise from me, for I am as great a coward as King James the VIth of Scotland, who could never see a naked sword without trembling; having been, as it is said, frightened in his mother's belly, when the fierce barrons of that country came in, and killed David Rizzio in his presence. I was once severely caned by a Scots officer now (if employed) in your service. Though the gentlemen of that choleric nation have been very much our friends in the present controversy, I find it is dangerous to offend them. Buchanan their own historian says, *perfervidum est Scotorum ingenium.* Therefore by the by, or *en passant*, for I suppose you are at present best pleased with French phrases, I would advise every man who regards his own peace, however smooth and gentle a Scotchman may appear, not to take him *against the hair*, as the saying is in their own country, but to remember the motto that surrounds the thistle, *Nemo me impune lacessat.* I also

very narrowly escaped a sound beating from a New England parson, who was strong enough, without either cane or cudgel, to have pounded me to a mummy. All this, and much more of the same kind, I bore with the most exemplary patience and submission. Perhaps it will be said, that though no danger is to be apprehended from any deeds, yet I may do harm enough by words and writing. To this I answer, that I have expended and exhausted my whole faculty of that kind in the service of the English. I have tried falsehood and misrepresentation in every shape that could be thought of, so that it is like a coat thrice turned that will not hold a single stitch. My friend, Gen. Ro————n, told me some time ago in my own shop, that I had carried things so far that people could not believe one word I said even though it were as true as the gospel. From all this I hope it plainly appears, that there could be no danger from me; and therefore as you cannot surely think of being cruel for cruelty's sake, that you will suffer me to live.

II. Any further punishment upon me, or any other of the unhappy refugees who shall remain in New York, will be altogether unnecessary, for they do suffer and will suffer from the nature of the thing, as much as a merciful man could wish to impose upon his greatest enemy. By this I mean the dreadful mortification (after our past puffing and vaunting) of being under the dominion of the Congress, seeing and hearing the conduct and discourse of the friends of America, and perhaps being put in mind of our own, in former times. You have probably seen many of the English newspapers, and

alſo ſome of mine, and you have among you the *few* priſoners who by a miracle eſcaped death in our hands. By all theſe means you may learn with what infinite contempt, with what provoking inſult, and with what unexampled barbarity, your people have, from the beginning to the end, been treated by the Britiſh officers, excepting a very ſmall number, but above all by the Tories and Refugees, who not having the faculty of fighting, were obliged to lay out their whole wrath and malice in the article of ſpeaking. I remember, when one of the priſoners taken after the *gallant* defence of Fort Waſhington had received ſeveral kicks for not being in his rank, he ſaid, is this a way of treating a gentleman? The anſwer was, gentleman? G—d——n your blood, who made you a gentleman? which was heard by us all preſent with unſpeakable ſatisfaction, and ratified by general applauſe. I have alſo ſeen one of your officers, after long impriſonment, for want of clothes, food and lodging, as meagre as a ſkeleton and as dirty and ſhabby as a London beggar, when one of our friends would ſay with infinite humour, look you there is one of King Congs's ragged raſcals. You muſt remember the many ſweet names given you in print, in England and America, Rebels, Raſcals, Ragamuffins, Tatterdemallions, Scoundrels, Blackguards, Cowards, and Poltroons. You cannot be ignorant how many and how complete victories we gained over you, and what a fine figure you made in our narratives. We never once made you to *retreat*, ſeldom even to *fly* as a routed army but to *run off into the woods*, to *Scamper away through the fields*, and to *take to your heels as uſual*

You will probably ſoon ſee the gazette account of the *defeat* of Mr. Waſhington at Monmouth. There it will appear how you ſcampered off, and how the Engliſh followed you and mowed you down, till their officers, with that humanity which is the *characteriſtic of the nation*, put a ſtop to this carnage, and then by a maſterly ſtroke of generalſhip, ſtole a march in the night, leſt you ſhould have ſcampered back again and obliged them to make a new ſlaughter in the morning.

Now, dear gentlemen, conſider what a miſerable affair it muſt be for a man to be obliged to apply with humility and ſelf-abaſement to thoſe whom he hath ſo treated, nay, even to beg life of them, while his own heart upbraids him with his paſt conduct, and perhaps his memory is refreſhed with the repetition of ſome of his rhetorical flowers. It is generally ſaid that our friend Burgoyne was treated with abundance of civility by general Gates, and yet I think it could not be very pleaſing to him to ſee and hear the boys when he entered Albany, going before and crying, *Elbow Room* for General Burgoyne there. Fear and trembling have already taken hold of many of the refugees and friends of government in this place. It would break your hearts to hear poor Sam. S———, of Philadelphia, weeping and wailing, and yet he was a peaceable Quaker who did nothing in the world but hire guides to the Engliſh parties who were going out to ſurprize and butcher you. My brother of trade, G— is ſo much affected, that ſome ſay he has loſt, or will ſoon loſe, his reaſon. For my own part I do not think I run any riſk in that reſpect. All

the wiſdom that I was ever poſſeſſed of is in me ſtill, praiſed be God, and likely to be ſo. A man that has run the gauntlet of creditors, duns and bailiffs, for years in England, and has been cu'gelled, kicked, and p—d upon in America, is in no danger of loſing his reaſon by any circumſtance whatever, ſo long as there is the leaſt proſpect of ſaving his life. I have heard ſome people ſay that diſhonour was worſe than death, but with the great Sancho Pancha, I was always of a different opinion. I hope, therefore, your honours will conſider my ſufferings as ſufficient to atone for my offences, and allow me to continue in peace and quiet, and according to the North Britiſh proverb, *ſleep in a whole ſkin.*

III. I beg leave to ſuggeſt, that upon being received into favour, I think it would be in my power to ſerve the United States in ſeveral important reſpects. I believe many of your officers want politeneſs. They are like old Cincinnatus, taken from the plow; and therefore muſt ſtill have a little roughneſs in their manners and deportment. Now I myſelf am the pink of courteſy, a genteel, portly, well-looking fellow, as you will ſee in a ſummer's day. I underſtand and poſſeſs the *bienſeance*, the *manner*, the *grace*, ſo largely inſiſted on by Lord Cheſterfield; and may without vanity ſay, I could teach it better than his Lordſhip, who in that article has remarkably failed. I hear with pleaſure, that your people are pretty good ſcholars, and have made particularly very happy advances in the art of ſwearing, ſo eſſentially neceſſary to a gentleman. Yet I dare ſay they will themſelves confeſs, that

they are ſtill in this reſpect far inferior to the Engliſh army. There is, by all accounts, a coarſeneſs and ſameneſs in their expreſſion; whereas there is variety, ſprightlineſs and figure, in the oaths of gentlemen well educated. Dean Swift ſays very juſtly, 'a footman may ſwear, but he cannot ſwear like a lord.' Now we have many lords in the Engliſh army, all of whom, when here, were pleaſed to honour me with their friendſhip and intimacy; ſo that I hope my qualifications can hardly be diſputed. I have imported many of the moſt neceſſary articles for appearance in genteel life. I can give them Lavornitti's ſoap-balls, to waſh their brown hands clean, perfumed gloves, paint, powder, and pomatum. I can alſo furniſh the New England men with rings, ſeals, ſwords, canes, ſnuff-boxes, tweezer-caſes, and many other ſuch *notions*, to carry home to their wives and miſtreſſes, who will be *nation*-glad to ſee them. You are alſo to know that I import a great many patent medicines, which may be of uſe to your army. It is ſaid that ſome of them are exceedingly liable to a diſorder called by phyſicians the *rancomania*, which is frequently followed by the two twin diſeaſes of plumbophobia and ſiderophobia. If they will but ſubmit to a ſtrict regimen, and take the tincture drops and pills which I prepare, I am confident the cure in moſt caſes would be infallible.

I have been informed, that a certain perſon, well known to your auguſt body, has clearly demonſtrated that virtue and ſeverity of manners are neceſſary to thoſe who would pull an old government down, which fete is now happily accompliſhed; but that luxury, diſſipation, and a taſte for pleaſures, are

equally neceſſary to keep up a government already ſettled. As I ſuppoſe you are fully convinced of this moſt ſalutary truth, I take it for granted, now that you have ſettled governments in all the ſtates, you are looking out for proper perſons to ſoften the rigid virtue of the Americans, and lay them aſleep in the lap of ſelf-indulgence. Now, I am proud to ſay, that there is not a man on this continent more able to ſerve you in this reſpect, than myſelf. I have ſerved many of the Britiſh officers in a moſt honourable ſtation and character, of which the great Pandarus of Troy was the moſt ancient example. If I am happy enough to make my own converſation and manners the ſtandard of the mode, I believe you will ſee very powerful effects of it in a ſhort time. But if, after recovering your friendſhip myſelf, I am able alſo to bring back and reconcile to this country the Rev. Dr A——, I believe the ſyſtem will be perfect. That gentleman, by his robuſt form, is well fitted to be an eccleſiaſtical bruiſer, if ſuch an officer ſhould be needed; and, with all due deference to the officers of the American army, I ſhould think that a better way of terminating differences among them in the laſt reſort than ſword or piſtol, for many obvious reaſons. He has alſo diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the publication of ſome poems, on ſubjects extremely well ſuited to the character of a Chriſtian clergyman, and very proper for initiating the tender mind in the ſofteſt and moſt delicious of all arts, *viz.* the art of love.

Finally, I hope I may be of ſervice to the United ſtates, as a writer, publiſher, collector, and maker of news. I mention this with ſome diffidence; becauſe perhaps you will think I have fore-

eloſed myſelf from ſuch a claim, by confeſſing (as above) that my credit as a news-writer is broken by over-ſtretching. But it is common enough for a man in buſineſs, when his credit is wholly gone in one place, by ſhifting his ground, and taking a new departure, to flouriſh away, and make as great or greater figure than before. How long that ſplendour will laſt is another matter, and belongs to an after conſideration. I might therefore, though my credit is gone in New York, ſet up again in the place which is honoured with your reſidence. Beſides, I might write thoſe things only or chiefly, which you wiſh to be diſbelieved, and thus render you the moſt eſſential ſervice. This would be aiming and arriving at the ſame point, by *manœuvring retrogade*. Once more, as I have been the oſtenſible printer of other people's lies in New York, what is to hinder me from keeping *incog.* and inventing or poliſhing lies, to be iſſued from the preſs of another printer in Philadelphia? In one, or more, or all of theſe ways, I hope to merit your approbation. It would be endleſs to mention all my devices; and therefore I will only ſay further, that I can take a truth, and ſo puff and ſwell and adorn it, ſtill keeping the proportion of its parts, but enlarging their dimenſions, that you could hardly diſcover where the falſehood lay, in caſe of a ſtrict inveſtigation.

That I may not weary you, I conclude with recommending myſelf to your kind countenance and protection; and in the mean time, waiting for a favourable anſwer, your petitioner, as in duty bound, ſhall ever pray, &c.

RECANTATION

OF

BENJAMIN TOWNE.

THE FOLLOWING WAS PRINTED IN LOUDON'S NEW YORK PACKET PUBLISHED AT FISHKILL, OCTOBER 1. 1778.

THE following facts are well known. 1ſt. That I Benjamin Towne uſed to print the Pennſylvania Evening Poſt, under the protection of Congreſs, and did frequently, and earneſtly ſolicit ſundry members of the ſaid Congreſs for diſſertations and articles of intelligence, profeſſing myſelf to be a very firm and zealous friend to American liberty. 2d. That on the Engliſh taking poſſeſſion of Philadelphia, I turned fairly round, and printed my Evening Poſt under the protection of General Howe and his army, calling the Congreſs and all their adherents, rebels, raſcals, and raggamuffins, and ſeveral other unſavoury names, with which the humane and polite Engliſh are pleaſed to honour them. Neither did I ever refuſe to inſert any diſſertation however ſcurrilous, or any article of intelligence ſent to me, although many of them I well knew to be, as a certain gentleman elegantly expreſſes it, *facts that never happened.* 3d. That I am now will-

ing and desirous to turn once more, to unsay all that I have last said, and to print and publish for the United States of America, which are likely to be uppermost, against the British tyrant; nor will I be backward in calling him, after the example of the great and eminent author of Common Sense, *The Royal Brute*, or giving him any other appellation still more opprobrious, if such can be found.

The facts being thus stated, (I will presume to say altogether fairly and fully) I proceed to observe, that I am not only proscribed by the President and Supreme executive council of Pennsylvania, but that several other persons are for reprobating my paper, and alledge that instead of being suffered to print, I ought to be hanged as a traitor to my country. On this account I have thought proper to publish the following humble confession, declaration, recantation and apology, hoping that it will assuage the wrath of my enemies, and in some degree restore me to the favour and indulgence of the public. In the first place then, I desire it may be observed, that I never was, nor ever pretended to be a man of character, repute or dignity. I was originally an undertrapper to the *famous Galloway* in his *infamous* squabble with Goddard, and did in that service contract such a habit of meanness in thinking, and scurrility in writing, that nothing *exalted*, as brother Bell provedore to the sentimentalists, would say, could ever be expected from me. Now changing sides, is not any way surprising in a person answering the above description. I remember to have read in the Roman history, that when Cato of Utica had put himself to death, being unable to

ſurvive the diſſolution of the republic, and the extinction of liberty; another ſenator of inferior note, whoſe name I cannot recollect, did the ſame thing. But what thanks did he receive for this? The men of reflection only laughed at his abſurd imitation of ſo great a perſonage, and ſaid—he might have lived though the republic had come to its period. Had a Hancock or an Adams changed ſides, I grant you they would have deſerved no quarter, and I believe would have received none; but to paſs the ſame judgment on the conduct of an obſcure printer is miſerable reaſoning indeed. After all, why ſo much noiſe about a trifle? What occaſion is there for the public to pour out all its wrath upon poor Towne; are turn coats ſo rare? Do they not walk on every ſide? Have we not ſeen Dr. S——, J—— A——, T—— C——, and many others who were firſt champions for liberty; then friends to government,—and now diſcover a laudable inclination to fall into their ranks as quiet and orderly ſubjects of the commonwealth of Pennſylvania. The rational moraliſts of the laſt age uſed to tell us, that there was an eſſential difference between virtue and vice, becauſe there was an eſſential difference to be obſerved in the nature and reaſon of things. Now, with all due deference to theſe great men, I think I am as much of a philoſopher as to know that there are no circumſtances of action, more important than thoſe of time and place. Therefore if a man pay no regard to the changes that may happen in theſe circumſtances, there will be very little virtue, and ſtill leſs *prudence* in his behaviour. Perhaps I have got rather too deep for common readers, and there-

fore ſhall aſk any plain Quaker in this city what he would ſay to a man who ſhould wear the ſame coat in ſummer as in winter in this climate? He would certainly ſay, "Friend, thy wiſdom is not great." Now whether I have not had as good reaſon to change my conduct as my coat, ſince laſt January, I leave to every impartial perſon to determine. 2. I do hereby declare and confeſs, that when I printed for Congreſs, and on the ſide of liberty, it was not by any means from principle, or a deſire that the cauſe of liberty ſhould prevail, but purely and ſimply from the love of gain. I could have made nothing but tar and feathers by printing againſt them as things then ſtood. I make this candid acknowledgment not only as a penitent to obtain pardon, but to ſhew that there was more conſiſtency in my conduct than my enemies are willing to allow. They are pleaſed to charge me with hypocriſy in pretending to be a whig when I was none. This charge is falſe; I was neither whig nor tory, but a printer. I deteſt and abhor hypocriſy. I had no more regard for General Howe or General Clinton, or even Mrs. Lowring, or any other of the *chaſte nymphs* that attended the Fete Champetre, alias Miſchianza, when I printed in their behalf, than for the Congreſs on the day of their retreat. It is pretended that I certainly did in my heart incline to the Engliſh, becauſe I printed much bigger lies and in greater number for them, than for the Congreſs. This is a moſt falſe and unjuſt inſinuation. It was entirely the fault of the Congreſs themſelves, who thought fit (being but a new potentate in the earth) to be much more modeſt, and

keep nearer the truth than their adverſaries. Had any of them brought me in a lie as big as a mountain it ſhould have iſſued from my preſs. This gives me an opportunity of ſhewing the folly as well as malignity of thoſe who are actuated by party ſpirit; many of them have affirmed that I printed monſtrous and *incredible* lies for General Howe. Now pray what harm could incredible lies do? The only hurt, I conceive, that any lie can do is by obtaining belief, as a truth; but an incredible lie can obtain no belief, and therefore at leaſt muſt be perfectly harmleſs. What will thoſe cavillers think, if I ſhould turn this argument againſt them, and ſay that the moſt effectual way to diſgrace any cauſe, is to publiſh monſtrous and incredible lies in its favour. In this view, I have not only innocence, but ſome degree of merit to plead. However, take it which way you will, there never was a lie publiſhed in Philadelphia that could bear the leaſt compariſon with thoſe publiſhed by J—— R———— in New York. This in my opinion is to be imputed to the ſuperiority, not of the printer, but of the prompter or prompters. I reckon Mr. T—— to have excelled in that branch; and probably he had many coadjutors. What do you think of 40,000 Ruſſians, and 20,000 Moors, which Moors too were ſaid by Mr. R———— to be dreadful among the women? As alſo of the boats building at the forks of Monongahela to carry the Congreſs down the Ohio to New Orleans? Theſe were ſwingers.—As to myſelf and friend H————, we contented ourſelves with publiſhing affidavits to prove that the king of France was determined to preſerve

the friendſhip that ſubſiſted between him and his good brother the king of England, of which he has given a *new proof*, by entering into and communicating his treaty with the United States of America. Upon the whole, I hope the public will attribute my conduct, not to diſaffection, but to attachment to my own intereſt and deſire of gain in my profeſſion; a principle, if I miſtake not, pretty general and pretty powerful in the preſent day.

3*dly*. I hope the public will conſider that I have been a timorous man, or, if you will, a coward, from my youth, ſo that I cannot fight,—my belly is ſo big that I cannot run,—and I am ſo great a lover of eating and drinking that I cannot ſtarve. When thoſe three things are conſidered, I hope they will fully account for my paſt conduct, and procure me the liberty of going on in the ſame *uniform* tenor for the future. No juſt judgment can be formed of a man's character and conduct, unleſs every circumſtance is taken in and fairly attended to; I therefore hope that this juſtice will be done in my caſe. I am alſo verily perſuaded that if all thoſe who are cowards as well as myſelf, but who are better off in other reſpects, and therefore *can* and *do run* whenever danger is near them, would befriend me, I ſhould have no inconſiderable body on my ſide. Peace be with the Congreſs and the army; I mean no reflections; but the world is a wide field, and I wiſh every body would do as they would be done by. Finally, I do hereby recant, draw back, eat in, and ſwallow down, every word that I have ever ſpoken, written or printed to the prejudice of the United States of America, hop-

ing it will not only ſatisfy the good people in general, but alſo all thoſe ſcatterbrained fellows, who call one another out to ſhoot piſtols in the air, while they tremble ſo much that they cannot hit the mark. In the mean time I will return to labour with aſſiduity in my lawful calling, and eſſays and intelligence as before ſhall be gratefully accepted by the public's moſt obedient humble ſervant,

BENJAMIN TOWNE.

A

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE

OF

NEW JERSEY.

ANSWERS IN PART TO MR MARBOIS'S QUESTIONS RESPECTING NEW JERSEY.

I. NEW JERSEY is bounded on the north by a line drawn from the North or Hudson's river to the boundary of Pennsylvania, fixed about ten years ago by commissioners appointed from New York and New Jersey, and marked in all the late maps. This line runs nearly west, and passes about thirty miles north of Morris-town in New Jersey.

It is bounded on the east by Hudson's river, from the line just now mentioned to the sea.

It is bounded on the south by the Atlantic Ocean, from the mouth of Hudson's river to Cape May, at the mouth of Delaware Bay. And on the west by the Delaware, to the place where the first mentioned line strikes it, between two and three hundred miles from the sea.

II. Smith's history of New Jersey is the only publication that can answer the design of this query.

III. New Jerſey conſiſts of thirteen counties, which, beginning at Cape May on the Delaware Bay, lie in the following order: Cape May, Salem, Cumberland, Glouceſter, Burlington, Hunterdon, Suſſex, Morris, Bergen, Eſſex, Somerſet, Middleſex, Monmouth. Theſe counties are ſubdivided into townſhips or precincts.

There are no cities in New Jerſey, but Burlington and Perth Amboy, which were ſeverally the capitals of Eaſt and Weſt Jerſey, as will be ſeen by the patents and hiſtory of the ſettlement.

The chief villages, or conſiderable places in New Jerſey, are Haddonfield, Mountholly, Burdentown, Trenton, Princeton, Brunſwick, Morriſton, Springfield, Woodbridge, Elizabeth-town, Newark, Hackenſack, Pittſtown, Cranberry, Shrewſbury, Allentown, Pennington, and ſome others of leſs note.

The only river of conſiderable extent in New-Jerſey, is the Raritan; the two branches of which paſſing through the north-eaſtern parts of the ſtate, unite near twenty miles above Brunſwick, and receiving the Milſtone and ſome other ſmaller ſtreams, it becomes navigable about two miles above Brunſwick, and from thence to Amboy bay, about twenty miles by water, is navigated by ſhallops and ſmall veſſels of one hundred or one hundred and fifty tons.

South river paſſes through Cranberry, in Middleſex county, and empties itſelf into the Raritan before it reaches Amboy.

Black river is a conſiderable ſtream, paſſing thro' Morris county eaſtward, and empties itſelf into Hudſon's river.

Paſſaic river paſſes through Bergen county, and enters into the bay oppoſite to Newark. There are falls pretty remarkable on this river, at the head of the bay, which many people go to ſee as a curioſity.

There are many other ſmall rivulets, not conſiderable, and many creeks and inlets upon the ſea coaſt, and particularly in the bay and river of Delaware, none of them navigable far into the country.

As to mountains, there is a ridge not very high, but commonly called Rocky Hill, which croſſes the great road from Philadelphia to New York, about five miles eaſtward of Princeton, and runs from the ſouth-eaſt to the north-weſt, continuing about ten miles in length, paſſing about one mile and a half to the north of Princeton. Though there are no hills properly ſpeaking, there is a continued and gradual aſcent from the Delaware to Princeton, and a gradual deſcent from thence to the eaſtward. There is a great ridge of mountains near and on the boundary between New Jerſey and New York, running chiefly from eaſt to weſt.

The trees are very various. As to foreſt trees, there are oaks of various kinds, aſh, maple, birch, chefnut, walnut, pine, locuſt. The middle and upper parts of the country run much into the ſeveral kinds of oak, and in the lower parts are to be found great quantities of pine and cedar. The mulberry tree thrives in moſt parts of the ſtate; and it ſeems remarkably favourable to fruit trees, particularly apples, pears, cherries and peaches, of all which there is great abundance. The vine grows ſpontaneouſly in many parts, and bears a large blue grape, not unpleaſant to eat.

The produce of the improved farms, is wheat, rye, barley, Indian corn, buckwheat, flax, and hemp. It is uſual for farmers to have a ſmall piece of land in tobacco; but it is only for their own uſe, or that of their ſervants; it is not raiſed in New Jerſey for ſale. All the garden herbs raiſed in France and England, thrive well in New Jerſey; ſo probably would vines, if cultivated by perſons who underſtood the buſineſs.

Black cattle are raiſed in New Jerſey to great advantage—alſo horſes. There is a particular turn in the inhabitants for raiſing fine horſes, from the breed imported from England. There is alſo a large breed of heavy draught horſes, in thoſe parts of the ſtate chiefly inhabited by the Low Dutch.

IV. The number of inhabitants in New Jerſey at preſent, is certainly not leſs than two hundred thouſand. There was an exact liſt of them taken about ten years ago, which will be procured in a ſhort time. There are negroes, but they are certainly not above one ſeventh or one tenth part of the whole. The negroes are exceedingly well uſed, being fed and clothed as well as any free perſons who live by daily labour.

V. There is no profeſſion of religion which has an excluſive legal eſtabliſhment. Some particular churches have charters of incorporation; and probably they would not be refuſed to a body of any denomination. All profeſſions are tolerated, and all proteſtants are capable of electing and being elected, and indeed have every privilege belonging

to citizens.—There are in New Jerſey, Engliſh Preſbyterians, Low Dutch Preſbyterians, Epiſcoplians, Baptiſts, Quakers. The two firſt, except the difference of the national connexion of the one with the church of Scotland, and the other with the church of Holland, and the language, are of the ſame principles as to doctrine. They have the ſame worſhip and government, and they are by far the moſt numerous. There is a great majority of the preſent legiſlature of theſe two denominations. Formerly the Quakers, though not the majority, had conſiderable influence; but ſince the late conteſt with Great Britain, they are fewer in number, and altogether without power. The Epiſcopalians are few. The Baptiſts are Preſbyterians in all other reſpects, only differing in the point of Infant-baptiſm; their political weight goes the ſame way as the Preſbyterians; their number is ſmall.

VI. There is at Princeton a college, which had originally a royal charter, begun in 1748. It is now confirmed in its privileges, with ſome alterations and improvements, by act of aſſembly. The charter name of it is, the college of New Jerſey; the name of the building, Naſſau Hall. It was in a flouriſhing ſtate before the war, having about one hundred and fifty under graduates and other ſcholars; but was entirely deſolated, and the houſe made a wreck, by the confuſion of the times—firſt by the Engliſh army, which entirely ſcattered the ſcholars, and took poſſeſſion of the houſe; and afterwards, by the American army making it a barrack and hoſpital. It now begins to recover, having of under graduates

and ſcholars about ſixty.—A printed account of the college has been given to Mr Marbois before.

There is alſo in New Jerſey a college, whoſe charter name is Queen's College, ſet up by the Low Dutch, with a particular view to preſerve their language, and all the peculiar cuſtoms of the church of Holland. They have no building as yet, but have carried on their inſtruction ſometimes at Brunſwick, ſometimes elſewhere.

The college of New Jerſey is the beſt building in the ſtate. Neither churches nor court-houſes are any where ſumptuous. There is no public hoſpital in the ſtate.

There are few men of letters in the ſtate of New Jerſey, except thoſe who belong to law, phyſic, or theology; and many of theſe profeſſions are often taken up without a liberal education. The ſtate conſiſts almoſt wholly of ſubſtantial farmers. There has been formerly known, eſpecially when the Quakers had ſome power, a prejudice againſt learning—That prejudice begins to wear off.

There are no turnpike roads. There are ſtatutes for the wideneſs of the public roads; alſo for repairing, though it is generally poorly done—yet from the climate and the level poſition of the country, the roads are excellent in ſummer. The accommodations in taverns are in general as good as in any ſtate in America. The great road from Philadelphia to New York, lies through the middle of New Jerſey, by Trenton, Princeton, Brunſwick, Woodbridge, Elizabeth-town, and Newark.

VII. I cannot at preſent recollect any cuſtoms

peculiar to the ſtate, or that from their ſingularity deſerve notice. New Jerſey was firſt peopled by the Low Dutch, at leaſt the eaſtern part of it. Their language is continued there as yet, though wearing out. They are a remarkably cleanly people, and frugal. They uſe their ſlaves and other ſervants with great humanity, often not ſcrupling white and black to eat together. People from all the other ſtates are continually moving into and out of this ſtate, ſo that there is little peculiarity of manners.

VIII. *The preſent ſtate of manufactures, commerce, and exterior trade.*

New Jerſey being in general ſettled by farmers, with a great equality of rank and even poſſeſſions, no conſiderable manufactures are eſtabliſhed in it. There are, however, tradeſmen diſperſed through it, of almoſt every kind. The farmers being frugal, and plain in their manners, always made both linen and woolen cloth for their own families and their ſervants. They have given greater attention to this matter within theſe five or ſix years that the differences with Great Britain have ſubſiſted. I believe it may be depended upon, that there is not one in ten of the members of the legiſlature of New Jerſey, who is not clothed in the manufacture of his own family for the greateſt part, and many of them have no other clothing of any kind. At this time a great quantity of very good cloth is made in the families. Some tradeſmen in different places make for ſale, but not much. There are ſome very conſiderable dealers in leather, and ſtill a greater number in hats.

All iron tools are well made here, but not for exportation out of the ſtate.

From the ſituation of New Jerſey, there is hardly any foreign trade carried on directly from it. The merchants in Trenton, Brunſwick, Burdentown, and ſeveral other places, have boats, ſhallops, and other ſmall veſſels, with which they trade to Philadelphia or New York. In former times ſhips might be entered both at Burlington and Amboy, for any part of the world: but few are ſent abroad—ſuch of our merchants as are concerned in foreign trade, being almoſt always joined in company with ſome of the large cities above mentioned.

IX. *A notice of the beſt ſea-ports in the ſtate, and how big are the veſſels they can receive.*

The beſt ſea-port in the ſtate of New-Jerſey is Amboy, which can receive veſſels of as great burden as New York. There has never been as yet any great foreign trade at Amboy. The vicinity of New York has probably been a hindrance to it. There are harbours at little Egg-harbour and great Egg-harbour, on the coaſt of the Atlantic, which privateers and traders have made a conſiderable uſe of ſince the war. They cannot receive veſſels of great burden; but the greateſt part of the trading veſſels can go in there. The ſame is the caſe with the creeks on the Jerſey ſhore, in the river Delaware.

X. *A notice of the commercial productions peculiar to that ſtate, and of thoſe objects which the inhabitants are obliged to draw from Europe and from other parts of the world.*

The productions of New Jerſey, and the ſources

of its wealth, are grain of every kind, as mentioned under queſtion third—horſes, cattle, ſalted beef and pork, and poultry. In times of peace, great quantities of all theſe are ſent to the Weſt Indies, and flax-ſeed to Europe, ſhipped however more commonly in Philadelphia or New York, than any port in New Jerſey. The city of Philadelphia receives a great proportion of its proviſions, including vegetables of every kind, from New Jerſey. The ſoil of that part of New Jerſey which is oppoſite to Philadelphia, is exceedingly proper for gardening, and derives much of its value from its proximity to that city.

The ſtate of New Jerſey is obliged to draw from Europe and other parts, tea, ſugar, wine, ſpirits. Before the war they purchaſed conſiderable quantities of Engliſh cloth, both linen and woolen, becauſe cheaper than they could manufacture it in many inſtances, and becauſe many tradeſmen and others had not the materials of manufacture. All articles of finery they muſt purchaſe if they uſe them—lawns, gauzes, ſilks and velvet.

XI. *The weights, meaſures, and the currency of hard money—Some details relating to the exchange with Europe.*

The weights and meaſures now uſed in New Jerſey, are the ſame as in England, of every kind—meaſures of length, ſolidity, ſuperfices, dry and liquid. The moſt common for grain is the buſhel, which contains eight Wincheſter gallons, and each gallon two hundred and ſeventy-two and a quarter ſolid inches.

The exchange between New Jerſey and Europe, is carried on almoſt wholly through Philadelphia and New York.

The ſtatute currency of money in New Jerſey is in the ſame proportion to ſterling as that of Pennſylvania, that is as five to three. A Spaniſh milled dollar is, of New Jerſey proclamation money, ſeven ſhillings and ſixpence. There was twenty years ago, a currency or way of reckoning in New Jerſey, commonly called light money, according to which a dollar was eight ſhillings and eight pence, but this ſeems now to be wholly diſuſed, or confined only to the north-eaſtern part of the ſtate. The other way of reckoning is called *proclamation money*, which prevails.

XII. *The public income and expences.*

The public income of New Jerſey conſiſts, ſo far as is known to me, of taxes annually laid by the aſſemblies; and is great or ſmall, as they ſhall think the exigences of the ſtate require. There is in general a great diſpoſition to ſave the public money; indeed ſuch as in many inſtances to make inadequate proviſion. The ſalary of the governor was by the act of ſupply, October 1775, before the change from a colony to a free ſtate, twelve hundred pounds, proclamation money; the judges of the ſupreme court, three in number, had each of them one hundred and fifty the ſame year; all other expences for clerks, &c. were ſmall; and the members of council and aſſembly had each eight ſhillings for every day's attendance. The delegates in Congreſs had at firſt twenty ſhillings per day; and during the de-

preciation of the money, if they made any allowance at the beginning of the year becauſe of its bad ſtate then, they never made any amends for the increaſed depreciation before the year expired.—As to this and all ſuch matters, they may be ſeen more fully from the printed laws, which I believe may be purchaſed of Iſaac Collins, printer to the ſtate, in Trenton.

XIII. *The meaſures taken with regard to the eſtates and poſſeſſions of the rebels, commonly called Tories.*

They have been all ſold off *in perpetuum*, and are now in poſſeſſion of the new proprietors; the debts upon them to faithful ſubjects, having been firſt diſcharged.

XIV. *The marine and navigation.*

There are no veſſels whatever belonging to the ſtate of New Jerſey. There are privateers who have commiſſions, which ſail from the ports on the coaſt, or on the enemy's lines. There is an Admiralty Court eſtabliſhed for the condemnation of prizes.—As to merchant ſhips, ſee the anſwer to queſtion eighth.

XV. *A notice of the mines, and other ſubterranean riches.*

There are ſome very valuable iron mines in New Jerſey, in Morris and Suſſex counties. Some companies in England were concerned in working ſome of theſe mines before the war. It was ſuſpected ſome years ago, that there were copper mines in New Jerſey; but no trial hitherto made has fully

ſucceeded—ſome gentlemen loſt their fortunes in the attempt.

It is not known whether there are any coal mines or not, as people every where burn wood.

XVI. *Some ſamples of the mines, and of the extraordinary ſtones; in ſhort, a notice of all that can increaſe the progreſs of human knowledge.*

Iron ore is ſo very common, that it cannot be ſuppoſed to be an object of curioſity. I have heard of and ſeen ſome pieces of black matter, that was ſaid, when diſſolved in water, to be exceedingly good ink. If this or any other curioſity can be obtained by enquiry, they ſhall be forwarded.—There is very good marl in ſome parts of New Jerſey, to the eaſtward.—There is no limeſtone in the parts of New Jerſey where I have been, but probably there is ſome in Suſſex.—There are in ſeveral places of New Jerſey, ſugar-maple trees, whence the country people draw ſugar for their own uſe, as in the back parts of New Hampſhire and Vermont.

XVII. *A deſcription of the Indians eſtabliſhed in the ſtates, before the European ſettlements, and of thoſe who are ſtill remaining. An indication of the Indian monuments diſcovered in that ſtate.*

The Indians and their manner of life, are deſcribed in ſeveral books, much better than I can do it, who was never among them. And indeed by comparing together all that I have ever heard or read, it appears, that the characteriſtic features of the Indians of North America, are the ſame which have diſtinguiſhed ſavages in all parts of the world, and wherever

diſcovered—gravity and ſullenneſs of deportment, love of hunting and war—that is to ſay, depredation; ferocity to their captives, lazineſs and averſion to habitual labour, tyranny over the female ſex, paſſive courage, and, if it may be called ſo, active cowardice, and ſtrong paſſions both of laſting gratitude and unextinguiſhable reſentment.

The chief thing that a philoſopher can learn from the Indians in New Jerſey is, that perhaps the moſt complete experiment has been made here how they would agree with cultivated life. At the time when the Indians ſold and confirmed the lands to the ſettlers, at their own requeſt, a tract of land was purchaſed for them to live in the heart of the colony, in Burlington county, of three thouſand acres and more which was ſecured to them by law. They had a village built, and a houſe of worſhip and a miniſter, and every poſſible encouragement to them to cultivate the land, and carry on trades; yet, after all, they were ſo far from increaſing in numbers or improving in induſtry, that at different times ſeveral of them went back into the woods, and the remainder dwindled away, ſo that there are few of them now left. On the whole it does not appear, that either by our people going among them, or by their being brought among us, that it is poſſible to give them a reliſh of civilized life. There have been ſome of them educated at this college, as well as in New England; but ſeldom or never did they prove either good or uſeful.

A FEW

REFLECTIONS

HUMBLY SUBMITTED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL, AND IN PARTICULAR TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

THOUGH the following reflections come from an individual citizen, no way connected with public buſineſs, I hope they will be read with candour and attention. All good conduct proceeds from certain radical principles; and retired theoretical perſons certainly may judge as well, perhaps they often judge better, of thoſe, than ſuch as are engaged in the buſtle and hurry of an active life, or occupied in the management of particular affairs. Another circumſtance which encourages me in this hope is, that I intend to offer nothing but what ſhall be even beyond the imputation of proceeding, either from party attachment or mercenary views.

When the Federal conſtitution was agreed on, it was the fervent deſire, and I may ſay the earneſt prayer of many, that it might take place, and get into operation with quietneſs, and under the acquieſcence and approbation of the public. This I

think we may say has happily been the case so far as we have yet proceeded. The persons chosen to fill the houses of Congress, have been generally approved. Perhaps some states, in a few instances, might have made a better choice; but upon the whole, there is little reason to complain. I remember to have heard a gentleman well acquainted with the subject, say of the former Congress which conducted the war, that he had never known a time in which it did not contain a great plurality of men of integrity, and of those a very respectable number of distinguished abilities. I hope and believe that this is the case at present; and may it always continue to be so.

The measures taken by Congress in their last session, have in general given satisfaction. I am not ignorant that there have been some severe, and in my opinion petulant and insolent remarks made upon the salaries fixed for public officers, and the compensation allowed for the attendance of members of Congress, especially the last. I am of opinion, however, that they are both reasonable, and the last at least as reasonable, if not more so, than the first. I hope few persons will ever be in Congress, who devoting their time to the public service, may not well deserve the compensation fixed for them, from their character and talents. And if they have lucrative professions, or valuable private fortunes, these must be deserted for a time, and probably a loss incurred greater than the whole wages. I should also be sorry to hear of any member of Congress who became rich by the savings above his expence. I know very well, that there have been

Congreſs men and Aſſembly men too, who have carried home conſiderable ſums from leſs wages; but they were ſuch generally, as did more good to their families by their penury, than to their country by their political wiſdom.

I come now to what I chiefly intended by this ſhort eſſay. Much time of the laſt ſeſſion was ſpent in debates upon fixing a place for the permanent reſidence of Congreſs, and building a federal city. That matter was under the conſideration of the former Congreſs, and was fixed and unfixed I believe more than once. It always occaſioned great altercation; nor was it poſſible to tell when it was ſettled, for whenever Congreſs changed its members, or the members changed their opinions, every thing that had been done was undone. In the laſt meeting of the federal Congreſs, it ſeems to have been finally decided; but, either by accident or the addreſs of ſome who were oppoſed to the deciſion, it was thrown open again, and is now left as unſettled as ever. I have not met with any body who was ſorry, but with many who were happy at this circumſtance; and I ſincerely wiſh that it may be ſuffered to ſleep in its preſent ſituation at leaſt for a conſiderable time, and till ſome other buſineſs of greater and more confeſſed importance ſhall be completely finiſhed. I am now to give my reaſons for this opinion.

1. A determination upon that ſubject is not *neceſſary*. When I ſay it is not neceſſary, I mean that we are not urged to it by any preſſing inconveniencies or injuries which we have ſuffered, or are ſuffering for want of it. Every body muſt own, that it would be very expenſive, and indeed I am

one myſelf, who, if it were to be done at all, and there were buildings to be erected which ſhould not belong to any ſtate, but to the union, would wiſh that they ſhould not be barely elegant, but magnificent, that they might not derogate from the dignity of the empire. This is not even contrary to the general principle of economy; for it has been obſerved, that ſome of the moſt frugal nations have been moſt ſumptuous in their public edifices, of which the Stadthouſe at Amſterdam is an example. Therefore, if the neceſſity were great, if the public buſineſs could not be carried on, nor the public authority maintained without it, I ſhould be for ſubmitting to every inconvenience—I would not be deterred even by the expence itſelf. But is this really the caſe? Does it appear to be neceſſary from the nature of the thing? No. The weight and influence of any deliberative or legiſlative body, depend much more on the wiſdom of their meaſures, than the ſplendid apartments in which they are aſſembled. Does it appear to be neceſſary from experience or the example of other nations? I think not. I can hardly recollect above one or two of the kingdoms or ſtates of Europe, in which the capital is central; and as to confederated republics, ſome of them have no common capital at all. The Swiſs Cantons have no federal city. The different ſtates of which this laſt conſiſts, have for ages, when they had occaſion to meet for common conſultation, held their Diets in different places. But we need go no further than our own experience. Did not the former Congreſs carry on the war with Great Britain, depend and ſecure the liberties of the United States,

without a federal city? Was the want of it greatly or deeply felt as an inconvenience? I do not recollect a ſingle complaint made in ſpeech or writing upon the ſubject.

2. It can be but little *profitable.* The truth is, when I attempt to recollect and enumerate the advantages to be derived from a federal city, in a central place, yet thinly inhabited, I find them very few and very ſmall. If the American empire come to be one conſolidated government, I grant it would be of ſome conſequence that the ſeat of that government and ſource of authority ſhould not be too diſtant from the extremities, for reaſons which I need not here mention. But if the particular ſtates are to be preſerved and ſupported in their conſtitutional government, it ſeems of very little conſequence where the Congreſs, conſiſting of repreſentatives from theſe ſtates, ſhall hold their ſeſſions. There is not only little profit in their being fixed and central, but perhaps ſome advantages might ariſe from their being unfixed and ambulatory. This laſt ſeems to be more ſuitable to the equality of rights of the ſeveral ſtates. It is far from being an impoſſible ſuppoſition, that the ſtate in which Congreſs ſhould be fixed, would think itſelf entitled to a leading, if not a domineering influence over the other ſtates. As to eaſineſs of acceſs, ſuch is the ſtate of this country, lying along the ſea-coaſt, and having ſo many navigable rivers, that any city whatever on the coaſt or great rivers is eaſily acceſſible, and the difference of diſtance, eſpecially when the payment is to be in proportion to the diſtance, is not worth mentioning. It is farther to be obſerved, that though buildings may be immediately raiſed for the accommodation

of Congreſs, yet a great city, or a city of opulence and commerce, could not be raiſed for a long tract of time. It is even uncertain whether the bare reſidence of Congreſs during their annual ſeſſions (which it is to be hoped in a few years will be but ſhort) independent of other circumſtances, will ever raiſe a great commercial city at all. The Hague, though the reſidence of the Stadtholder, is far from being the largeſt, moſt populous, or moſt wealthy city in Holland. Now I humbly conceive, that if not reſidence in, yet nearneſs to ſome important commercial city or cities, will be found to be abſolutely neceſſary for tranſactions relating to money or finance: ſo that, if the advantages and diſadvantages of a federal city on the propoſed plan are fairly weighed, the latter would preponderate.

3. There is reaſon to fear that it may be very hurtful. Nothing is of ſo much conſequence to us at preſent as union; and nothing is ſo much the deſire of all unprejudiced, public-ſpirited and virtuous men. The federal conſtitution is but new. It is, we hope, taking place; but cannot yet be ſaid to have taken root. It will from the nature of things, take ſome time before it can acquire the reſpect and veneration neceſſary in every government from the body of the people, who are always guided by feeling and habit, more than by a train of reaſoning, however concluſive. Now, is there no reaſon to fear that the diſputes upon this ſubject may produce warmth and violence, and perhaps an alienation of mind in ſome ſtates againſt others, very prejudicial to public order? The moſt trifling ſubjects of diſpute have ſometimes created diviſions

both in larger and ſmaller political bodies, which have ended in common ruin. If I am rightly informed, the diſputes which have already taken place in Congreſs upon this ſubject, have been carried on with greater virulence of temper and acrimony of expreſſion, than upon any other that has been under their deliberation. This is not to be wondered at; for it is indeed of ſuch a nature, that it has a nearer relation to ſtate attachments and local prejudices than any other that can be named. Perhaps in ſuch a queſtion it is lawful, decent, and even neceſſary, to plead the local intereſt of particular ſtates; and therefore it is to be expected that every delegate will contend with earneſtneſs for that of his own. At any rate, whatever oſtenſible public reaſons may be deviſed by a fertile invention, all unprejudiced hearers will believe, that it is local attachment that guides their judgment, and inflames their zeal. The only uſe that it is neceſſary for me to make of ſuch a remark, is to ſhew that the contention and animoſity raiſed by this diſpute will probably extend itſelf to every other, and that it will not be confined to the contending members in Congreſs, but will ſpread itſelf through all the ſtates, whoſe cauſe they plead, and whoſe intereſt they ſeem to eſpouſe. This is one of thoſe queſtions that had much better be decided wrong by general conſent, than decided right by a ſmall majority, without convincing or ſatisfying the opponents.

4. In the laſt place, it is certainly at leaſt *unſeaſonable*. Though it were poſſible juſtly to anſwer all the objections I have ſtated above, I muſt ſtill ſay, there is a time for every thing under the ſun. A meaſure may be good in itſelf, and even neceſſary

in a qualified ſenſe, yet if there be another duty incumbent upon the ſame body, that is better and more neceſſary, this ſurely ought to have the precedence in point of time. Now, I think it cannot be denied, and all intelligent perſons in the United States ſeem to be of opinion, that bringing order into our finances, reſtoring and eſtabliſhing public credit, is the moſt important buſineſs which the Congreſs has to do. It is alſo the moſt urgent in point of time; becauſe in the interval, many public creditors are in a ſituation truly deplorable, whereas I can think of nobody that is ſuffering much for want of a federal city. The two deſigns are alſo connected together as cauſe and effect; and I need not tell any body which of theſe ought to go foremoſt. What a romantic project will it be to fix on a ſituation, and to form plans for building a number of palaces, before we provide money to build them with, or even before we pay thoſe debts which we have already contracted? This is a matter in which not only all the citizens of America, thoſe who are, and thoſe who are not, public creditors, are deeply concerned, but on which will depend our future ſecurity, our intereſt and influence among foreign nations, and even the opinion that ſhall be formed of us by poſterity itſelf.

Theſe few reflections, not enlarged upon as they might eaſily have been, nor ſwelled or exaggerated by pompous declamation, but ſimply and nakedly propoſed,—I leave to the judgment of the impartial public; and remain,

Their moſt obedient,
Humble ſervant,
X. Y.

ON THE

GEORGIA

CONSTITUTION.

SIR,

IN your paper of Saturday laſt, you have given us the new Conſtitution of Georgia, in which I find the following reſolution, "No clergyman of any denomination ſhall be a member of the General Aſſembly." I would be very well ſatisfied that ſome of the gentlemen who have made that an eſſential article of this conſtitution, or who have inſerted and approve it in other conſtitutions, would be pleaſed to explain a little the principles, as well as to aſcertain the meaning of it.

Perhaps we underſtand pretty generally, what is meant by a clergyman, *viz.* a perſon regularly called and ſet apart to the miniſtry of the goſpel, and authoriſed to preach and adminiſter the ſacraments of the Chriſtian religion. Now ſuffer me to aſk this queſtion: Before any man among us was ordained a miniſter, was he not a citizen of the United States, and if being in Georgia, a citizen of

the ſtate of Georgia? Had he not then a right to be elected a member of the aſſembly, if qualified in point of property? How then has he loſt, or why is he deprived of this right? Is it by offence or diſqualification? Is it a ſin againſt the public to become a miniſter? Does it merit that the perſon who is guilty of it ſhould be immediately deprived of one of his moſt important rights as a citizen? Is not this inflicting a penalty which always ſuppoſes an offence? Is a miniſter then diſqualified for the office of a ſenator or repreſentative? Does this calling and profeſſion render him ſtupid or ignorant? I am inclined to form a very high opinion of the natural underſtanding of the freemen and freeholders of the ſtate of Georgia, as well as of their improvement and culture by education, and yet I am not able to conceive, but that ſome of thoſe equally qualified, may enter into the clerical order: and then it muſt not be unfitneſs, but ſome other reaſon that produces the excluſion. Perhaps it may be thought that they are excluded from civil authority, that they may be more fully and conſtantly employed in their ſpiritual functions. If this had been the ground of it, how much more properly would it have appeared, as an order of an eccleſiaſtical body with reſpect to their own members. In that caſe I ſhould not only have forgiven but approved and juſtified it; but in the way in which it now ſtands, it is evidently a puniſhment by loſs of privilege, inflicted on thoſe who go into the office of the miniſtry; for which, perhaps, the gentlemen of Georgia may have good reaſons, though I have not been able to diſcover them.

But beſides the uncertainty of the principle on which this reſolution is founded, there ſeems to me much uncertainty as to the meaning of it. How are we to determine who is or is not a clergyman? Is he only a clergyman who has received ordination from thoſe who have derived the right by an uninterrupted ſucceſſion from the apoſtles? Or is he alſo a clergyman, who is ſet apart by the impoſition of hands of a body of other clergymen, by joint authority? Or is he alſo a clergyman who is ſet a part by the church members of his own ſociety, without any impoſition of hands at all? Or is he alſo a clergyman who has exhorted in a methodiſt ſociety, or ſpoken in a quaker meeting, or any other religious aſſembly met for public worſhip? There are ſtill greater difficulties behind:—Is the clerical character indelible? There are ſome who have been ordained who occaſionally perform ſome clerical functions, but have no paſtoral charge at all. There are ſome who finding public ſpeaking injurious to health, or from other reaſons eaſily conceived, have reſigned their paſtoral charge, and wholly diſcontinued all acts and exerciſes of that kind; and there are ſome, particularly in New England, who having exerciſed the clerical office ſome time, and finding it leſs ſuitable to their talents than they apprehended, have voluntarily relinquiſhed it, and taken to ſome other profeſſion, as law, phyſic, or merchandize—Do theſe all continue clergymen, or do they ceaſe to be clergymen, and by that ceſſation return to, or recover the honourable privileges of laymen?

I cannot help thinking that theſe difficulties are

very conſiderable, and may occaſion much litigation, if the article of the conſtitution ſtands in the looſe, ambiguous form in which it now appears; and therefore I would recommend the following alterations, which I think will make every thing definite and unexceptionable.

"No clergyman, of any denomination, ſhall be capable of being elected a member of the Senate or Houſe of Repreſentatives, becauſe [here inſert the grounds of offenſive diſqualification, which I have not been able to diſcover] Provided always, and it is the true intent and meaning of this part of the conſtitution, that if at any time he ſhall be completely deprived of the clerical character by thoſe by whom he was inveſted with it, as by depoſition for curſing and ſwearing, drunkenneſs or uncleanneſs, he ſhall then be fully reſtored to all the privileges of a free citizen; his offence ſhall no more be remembered againſt him; but he may be choſen either to the Senate or Houſe of Repreſentatives, and ſhall be treated with all the reſpect due to his *brethren*, the other members of Aſſembly."

THE

DRUID,

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN NUMBERS PERIODICALLY.

NUMBER I.

SIR,

IT is my intention, by your permiſſion and aſſiſtance to attempt the inſtruction and entertainment of the public once a month, on miſcellaneous ſubjects. This letter ſhall ſerve as the firſt paper and ſhall be an introduction to thoſe that are to follow, by pointing out the ſpirit and deſign of the undertaking, and the plan upon which it is to be conducted.

The title which I have aſſumed, was not intended to carry any wit in it, and indeed not much meaning, further than what is common to all names, the diſtinction of one thing or perſon from another. It proved a matter of no little difficulty to fix upon a title, after ſo great a variety as the world has ſeen, ſince the practice of periodical eſſays was firſt introduced. After a good deal of deliberation on a matter of very little moment, the above was ſuggeſt-

ed, by the place which is now, and is likely to be, my reſidence, while I continue on earth. It is a ſmall but neat houſe, in a pleaſant, retired ſituation, ſurrounded with woods, in all the ſimple majeſty of their uncultivated ſtate. Neither was it unſuitable to my time of life, the age of fifty, a cool and contemplative ſeaſon, when men of education or buſineſs have generally ſeen as much of the world as ſatisfies their curioſity, and enables them to underſtand well enough what is paſſing in it; ſo that they have neither neceſſity nor inclination to mix again in its active ſcenes.

I was born and educated in Great Britain, and had all the advantage I could receive from a long reſidence in one of the moſt celebrated ſeats of learning in that happy kingdom. The prime and vigour of life I ſpent in the midſt of public buſineſs and had a thorough knowledge of the greateſt part, and perſonal intimacy with not a few, of the perſons moſt diſtinguiſhed in rank, politics, or literature, for the laſt thirty years. From what circumſtances, or with what views, I came into this country, it is of no conſequence for the reader to know; ſuffice it therefore to ſay, that I was not tranſported by Sir John Fielding, but came of my own proper motion and free choice; and indeed have never met with any thing in paſſing through life, that could be ſuppoſed either to ſour the temper, or break the vigour of the mind. There are not a few who, towards the cloſe of life, acquire, a ſettled hatred or contempt of mankind, and ſeem diſpoſed to avenge their own real or ſuppoſed calamities on the world in general, by the acrimony of their

converſation, and the virulent ſatire of their writings. Productions dictated by ſuch a ſpirit, have often, it muſt be owned, ſuch a poignant ſeverity, as deeply wounds the object of their reſentment, and yet, I think ſeldom adds to the reliſh of thoſe for whom the entertainment is provided.

It has been generally ſuppoſed, that ſatire and invective is the way of writing, of all others, moſt agreeable to the public; and the reaſon given for it is very little to the credit of human nature, *viz.* The prevalence of envy and malignity in the bulk of mankind. Had I been of this opinion, I would have cautiouſly avoided introducing the ſentiment, at leaſt ſo ſoon, as it would have been but a poor compliment to that very public, whoſe attention I mean to ſolicit, and whoſe improvement I wiſh to promote. I confeſs that a thorough knowledge of the world, and extenſive reading in hiſtory, have often produced mean thoughts of human nature. We ſee ſometimes old hackneyed politicians diſcover a jealouſy of the characters, and an indifference to the ſufferings of others, which ſurpriſes and offends men of leſs experience, who are therefore often laughed at for their weakneſs. This, in ſome inſtances is the miſtake of the obſerver, while the coolneſs and compoſure of ſpirit, the deliberate and ſelf-collected carriage, which is the effect of time, is falſely called a callous or unfeeling diſpoſition. But where the remark is juſt, and a real and general hatred of others has obtained full dominion, it would not be ſo decent to infer from it that mankind are univerſally worthleſs or incorrigible, as to

impute it to the ſelfiſh meanneſs of that heart in which it had taken place.

It is very common for authors to go to an extreme on the one hand or on the other, in ſpeaking of human nature. Thoſe philoſophers who ſpeak of it in ſuch exalted terms as to contradict the truths of religion, have preſent experience and the hiſtory of paſt ages directly againſt them. The moſt illuſtrious perſons in the records of time, have derived the greateſt part of their luſtre itſelf, either from the ſingularity of their character, or, which is nearly the ſame thing, from the depravity of others, who needed their aſſiſtance for inſtruction or correction. It was ſmartly, at leaſt, if not juſtly ſaid, by an author not many years ago, that the wiſdom of legiſlators, and the admirable policy of ſtates, and even the purity of moral precepts, are juſt ſuch arguments for the dignity of human nature as gibbets are. There is, doubtleſs, no ſmall degree of error, ignorance prejudice and corruption to be found among men; but theſe, when properly viewed, ſerve rather to demonſtrate the importance and neceſſity of information and inſtruction. There are not only particular inſtances in which the human mind has diſcovered the moſt exalted virtue as well as amazing powers, but the human race in general, with all its defects, is certainly the nobleſt and moſt valuable in this lower world, and therefore the moſt worthy of cultivation. To this may be added, that there is no circumſtance in which there is a more manifeſt diſtinction between man and the inferior creatures, than that the individual is more helpleſs as well as the kind more noble; and therefore the intercourſe of

ſociety and mutal aſſiſtance is abſolutely neceſſary to his improvement and perfection.

But this is perhaps treating the ſubject in too abſtract and philoſophical a manner, which I well know is not much to the taſte of the preſent age. The importance of knowledge, and the power of intellectual light, will be readily confeſſed. The queſtions to be ſeriouſly debated with himſelf by an author, at his firſt ſetting out, are, what encouragement he has to devote himſelf to the public ſervice? and, what reaſon to think he hath any thing to communicate that is worthy of the public attention? Now, as to the *firſt* of theſe, it is my opinion, that though error, prejudice, and partiality, are very univerſal, that is to ſay, they have place in ſome degree in many perſons of every rank, age, and country; yet their influence in each, has properly ſpeaking, but a narrow ſphere. Truth is much ſtronger than them all. They ſhew themſelves chiefly in the ſmaller intereſts of particulars; but there is a candor and impartiality in a diffuſive public which may be in a great meaſure depended upon, and which will both hear truth and obey it. There is not, perhaps, a man in that public, but has many prejudices and prepoſſeſſions; but theſe are confined within certain bounds, like the ſphere of attraction of particular bodies, round himſelf: when you go beyond that ſphere, they are not felt, or they are felt very weakly. There is an obſervation I have ſometimes made, which I do not remember to have read in any author, but which, if juſt, ſhould teach every man to revere the public judgment. The remark is, that I can ſcarcely recollect any perſon well and intimately known to me, whoſe performances, either in ſpeak-

ing or writing, had been exhibited to the world for any time, of whoſe talents and erudition the great plurality did not judge exactly in the ſame manner that I did myſelf. If they do juſtice to every other perſon, why ſhould I doubt their doing it to me? Ignorance, prejudice, malice, or accident, may have ſome influence at firſt; but their effects are merely temporary, and are ſpeedily effaced. Time is a diligent enquirer, and a juſt judge. I could almoſt ſay the ſame thing of a man's moral character, under two exceptions: If you go beyond the bounds of local politics, and abſtract entirely from religious differences, every man is ſpoken of pretty nearly as he deſerves. I am ſufficiently aware that there are particular exceptions to this general theory, but I have not now time to enter upon them; and therefore ſhall leave them till they fall in my way in the diſcuſſion of ſuch ſubjects as ſhall be undertaken in my future papers.

As to the *ſecond* point, whether I have any thing to communicate that is worthy of the public attention? It is plain from the appearance of this paper, that I have already judged of it ſo far as to make the attempt; it is therefore too late for me, and too early for the reader, to take that matter into conſideration. I ſhall, however, mention briefly the plan which I mean to follow. The general ſubject of theſe papers ſhall be the philoſophy of human nature and of human life; I would willingly join ſcience and reflection to experience and obſervation. Literature and morals, arts and induſtry, ſhall be my chief themes; and under one or other of theſe, every thing may be introduced, that can

in the leaſt contribute to the happineſs of ſocial or private life. I muſt beg the reader to obſerve, that in handling all theſe ſubjects, I ſhall have a particular view to the ſtate and intereſt of this riſing country. As in youth the human frame wears its lovelieſt form; as the ſpring is the moſt charming ſeaſon of the revolving year: ſo, a country newly planted, and every day advancing to a maturer ſtate, affords the higheſt delight to a contemplative philoſopher, and is, at the ſame time, the ſtrongeſt invitation to activity and uſefulneſs.

I am ſenſible that ſome will think the preſent an improper ſeaſon for beginning on ſo extenſive a plan. They will ſay the time calls not for ſpeculation but action. Our induſtry is now all turned into one channel, the vigorous exertion of the ſpirit of defence. When liberty, property and life are at ſtake, we muſt not think of being ſcholars, but ſoldiers. When happy peace returns we ſhall be able to apply with proper attention and vigour to the improvement of our minds, as well as to the cultivation of the ſoil: till then we have other work upon our hands. I muſt inform the reader, that theſe are miſtaken reflections. There is ſuch a connection among all the arts that improve or embelliſh human nature, that they are beſt promoted in conjuction, and generally go in a body. As I look without ſolicitude, or rather with unſhaken confidence of ſucceſs, on the preſent glorious and important ſtruggle for the liberties of mankind; ſo I conſider it as a proper ſeaſon for the moſt ardent application to the improvement of this country in all reſpects. In times of public commotion the human mind is rouſed, and ſhakes off the incumbrances of ſloth and ſelf-

indulgence. Thoſe who put on the harneſs and go into the field, muſt be encouraged, aſſiſted, and even ſupported, by the activity and induſtry of thoſe who remain at home. Beſides, I am much miſtaken if the time is not juſt at hand, when there ſhall be greater need than ever in America, for the moſt accurate diſcuſſion of the principles of ſociety, the rights of nations, and the policy of ſtates; all which ſhall have a place in the ſubſequent numbers of this paper. But above all, can it ever be unſeaſonable to lay before the public what tends to improve the temper and morals of the reader, which ſhall be the ultimate object of all my diſquiſitions? He who makes a people *virtuous*, makes them *invincible*.

The reader will now, in ſome degree, underſtand the deſign and extent of this undertaking. As to wit and humour, I chooſe to make no promiſes upon that head, leſt I ſhould break them. Moſt people, perhaps, differ from me; but I confeſs I would rather read a tedious argument than a dull joke. Yet the favours of the ingenious, as the ſaying is (poſt paid) may perhaps enable me ſometimes to gratify a reader of taſte: only I muſt take the liberty of being pleaſed myſelf firſt, otherwiſe they ſhall ſleep with me, or return to the authors. Some, perhaps, will wonder that I have ſaid nothing of the delightful themes of love and gallantry, eſpecially as it is ſo eaſy to eſtabliſh a connection between the tender paſſion and military glory. The younger claſs of my readers may reſt ſatisfied, that they ſhall not want good advice enough, which may be applied to that and to every other ſubject; but I do not take myſelf to be qualified to paint the

ardors of a glowing flame. I have not seen any killing eyes these several years. It was but yesterday, that I smiled involuntarily on reading a poem in your last magazine, setting forth, that both Beauty and Wisdom had taken up their residence with a certain nymph, the one in her cheek, the other in her tongue, and that they were resolved never to depart; which I thought was a little unfortunate for all the rest of the sex. I wish every Strephon and Daphne heartily well, and that the exalted and rapturous phrases of Arcadia may be soon brought down to the composed discourse of a quiet man and wife in Philadelphia; in which character, perhaps they may sometimes hear from me, I hope, to their great benefit.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

THE DRUID.

NUMBER II.

SIR,

WHEN I first came into this country, nothing was farther from my expectation than the contest that has now taken place between Great Britain and the Colonies. The reader, I suppose, will also readily believe me when I affirm, that what relates to this important struggle, made but a small part of the matter I had meditated and digested for the subject of these dissertations. But, from some letters which I have received, and much con-

verſation that I have heard, it appears plain, that ſomething of this kind is expected from me, and that if it is long withheld, it will be difficult to avoid ſuſpicion from the warmer ſons of liberty. It is not eaſy to determine what branches of this great argument it would be beſt to take up, as moſt ſuitable to a ſpeculative philoſopher, and at the ſame time moſt neceſſary or uſeful to the bulk of my readers. The natural rights of mankind, and the cauſe of liberty in general, have been explained and defended in innumerable treatiſes, ancient and modern. The application of theſe principles to the American controverſy, has been made by many writers among us, with the greateſt clearneſs and preciſion. The nature of government, and method of balancing a civil conſtitution, I cannot ſay has been handled either with ſo much fulneſs or propriety as the other topics; yet on this alſo many excellent obſervations have been made. If it has not been much reaſoned on, it ſeems nevertheleſs to be both felt and underſtood, in almoſt every corner of this continent.

Leaving, therefore, theſe ſubjects for the preſent, as we are yet engaged in a war ſomewhat ſingular in its nature, important in its conſequences, and uncertain in its duration, I ſhall beg leave to make ſome remarks as a ſcholar, and as a citizen of the world, on *the manner of carrying on war*. By this is not meant, to lay down a plan of diſcipline, or tactics for an army, or of ſtratagems and manœuvres for a general or inferior leader; but to conſider by what means wars of different kinds may be carried on, conſiſtently with reaſon,

conſcience, or common utility. Every body muſt have obſerved how frequently the newſpapers have been filled with complaints of our enemies, as acting ſavagely and barbarouſly—as being guilty of unnatural cruelty—as carrying on a felonious and piratical war—as acting contrary to the laws of war. I have, however, taken notice, that among all theſe diſſertations little or nothing has been ſaid to ſhew *why* they have acted barbarouſly, further than that they have acted unjuſtly in being our enemies at all. No one has told us what are the laws of war, or endeavoured to make us underſtand when enemies may be ſaid to act a fair and honourable, and when a daſtardly and cruel part.

This ſubject I ſhall now therefore enter upon; and will endeavour to handle it with as much ſimplicity as poſſible, that it may be uſeful to perſons of the loweſt rank, and moſt common underſtanding. Let me trace it to its ſource. Wherever ſociety exiſts founded upon clear eſtabliſhed laws, this obliges us to form an idea of a ſtate previous to the formation of ſociety, or before ſuch, or any laws, were made and acknowledged to be in force. This is called a ſtate of nature. I do not enter into the innumerable queſtions upon this ſubject; as, how long it could continue, when men increaſed in number? Whether it is a ſtate of war or peace? Whether inclination prompted, or neceſſity compelled, men to enter into ſociety? It is ſufficient for my purpoſe, to obſerve, that independent nations are in a ſtate of natural liberty with reſpect to one another, or as man to man previous to the ſocial compact. When they diſagree, they have no common umpire

or judge to reſort to, but muſt decide their quarrels by the ſword. The queſtions then to be reſolved are three: 1. Are there any laws at all by which they are bound? or, are all kinds of force or violence equally juſt? 2. If not, what is the law? what is it that makes the diſtinction? and, 3. what is the ſanction of the law? To whom ſhall we complain when it is broken?

If there is any ſuch law, it is certainly very juſtly denominated, by civilians, the *law of nature and nations*. Of nature, becauſe its principles are to be derived from the ſtate of natural or univerſal liberty, and perſonal independence; and of nations, becauſe there is no perſon in ſuch a ſtate at preſent, excepting nations or large bodies, who conſider themſelves as independent of each other. Now, that there is ſuch a law, I think is evident, not only from the univerſal acknowledgment of men, and the practice of nations from the earlieſt ages, but from the nature of the thing. If there are any duties binding upon men to each other, in a ſtate of natural liberty, the ſame are due from nation to nation. Bodies politic do not in this circumſtance, differ from individuals. The ſame anſwer muſt be made to the ſecond queſtion. It is impoſſible to mention any right that an individual may juſtly claim, either as to perſon or property, from his fellow men, but a ſociety has the like claim upon any other ſociety. Their perſons muſt not be aſſaulted, nor their property invaded. The ſingle purpoſe of ſociety, indeed, is to protect the individual, and to give him the ſtrength of the public arm, in defence of his juſt and natural right.

But it will be aſked, in the third place, What is the ſanction of this law? and who is to call the offender to account? To this I anſwer, That the ſanction of the law of nature is nothing elſe but a ſenſe of duty, and accountableneſs to the ſupreme Judge; to which may be added, ſuch a ſenſe of general utility, as makes men fear, that if they notoriouſly trample upon it, reproach and infamy among all nations will be the effect, and probably reſentment and indignation by common conſent. Agreeably to this, having recourſe to force is often called an appeal to heaven, and it is, at the ſame time, generally accompanied with an attempt, by ſome public declaration, to convince other nations of the juſtice of the cauſe.

Omitting many things that are not connected with the point I have in view, particularly without enumerating the legitimate cauſes of war, but ſuppoſing nations engaged in a war which they believe on both ſides to be juſt, let us aſk, What are the means by which this war is to be carried on? The firſt and moſt obvious anſwer is, By all manner of force or open violence; and the moſt able warrior is preſumed to be the one that can invent weapons the moſt deadly and deſtructive. It is admitted alſo, on all hands, that force may be uſed, not only againſt the perſons and goods of rulers, but of every member of the hoſtile ſtate. This may ſeem hard, that innocent ſubjects of a ſtate ſhould ſuffer for the folly and indiſcretion of the rulers, or of other members of the ſame ſtate. But it is often unavoidable. The whole individuals that compoſe a ſtate are conſidered but as one body. It would

be impoſſible for an enemy to diſtinguiſh the guilty from the innocent. When men ſubmit to a government, they riſk their own perſons and poſſeſſions in the ſame bottom with the whole, in return for the benefits of ſociety.

Upon this principle, open violence may be ſaid to have no bounds, and every method that can be invented to ſend deſtruction and miſery to any part of the hoſtile ſtate, may be thought to be permitted. But upon the principles of general equity, and the conſent and practice of modern times, acts of cruelty and inhumanity, are to be blamed, and to be conſidered as a violation of the law of nations. Many of them might be eaſily enumerated, ſuch as refuſing quarter to thoſe who ſubmit, killing priſoners when they might be kept without any danger, killing women and children, inventing methods of torture, burning and deſtroying every thing that might be of uſe in life. The uſe of poiſoned weapons alſo has been generally condemned, as well as poiſoning of ſprings and proviſions.

The celebrated Dr. Robertſon of Edinburgh, in a ſermon before the ſociety for propagating Chriſtian knowledge, has made an obſervation to this purpoſe, "that to the honour of modern times, and (as he thinks) particularly to the honour of Chriſtianity itſelf, there is much more gentleneſs and humanity in the manner of carrying on war than formerly." If we look into ancient hiſtory we ſhall ſee ſuch inſtances of ferocity and cruelty in many caſes, as are too ſhocking to be related. There is no fact, however, in the records of anti-

quity on this ſubject, that ever ſtruck me ſo much as the account given of Seſoſtris, becauſe it ſhews, not the barbarity of a particular monſter, but the ſpirit of the times. He is extolled by many ancient authors for his clemency, becauſe he did not put to death the princes whom he unjuſtly attacked and conquered. Yet he ordered them to wait upon him with a yearly tribute, and on theſe occaſions uſed to yoke them in his chariot, and make them draw him, in place of horſes, to the temple. How much worſe than death would this appear at preſent to a captive prince?

But however juſtly praiſe may be due to modern times for comparative humanity, what we have ſaid above is only general and undefined. Let us ſeek for the true principle that ought to govern the conduct of refined and enlightened nations. This, if I miſtake not, is, *That all acts of cruelty which have no tendency to weaken the reſiſting force, are contrary to reaſon and religion, and therefore to the law of nature and nations.* The end of war is to obtain juſtice, and reſtore peace, therefore whatever tends to leſſen or deſtroy the force of the enemy, muſt be permitted. It is in this view alone that the capture of private property is allowed and juſtified. But to take lives without neceſſity, and even to treat priſoners with oppreſſion or inſult, above all to diſtreſs or torture the weaker ſex, or the helpleſs infant, ought to be deteſted by every nation profeſſing the goſpel.

The principle which I have laid down, may be applied univerſally, and will ſerve to point out when any meaſure is to be juſtified or condemned, be-

tween perſons profeſſing open hoſtility againſt each other. I will take the liberty to apply it to ſome things that have been done or attempted in the preſent war, carried on by Great Britain againſt America. It is now undeniable, that endeavours have been uſed to bring the Indian tribes upon the back ſettlements. This I call an act of extreme and unjuſtifiable barbarity, becauſe their manner of making war is well known. They are neither formidable for their number nor their ſtrength, but for making inroads upon the dwellings of their enemies, and putting to death women and children, with circumſtances of horrid cruelty. This is ſo far from weakening the force of the people againſt whom it is practiſed, that it tends to inſpire them with a revenge and fury not to be reſiſted. The well known hiſtory of the late war, will both explain and ſupport what I have ſaid. The cruelty of the Indians produced ſuch a ſpirit in the back ſettlers, which not only repelled their attacks, but in ſome inſtances retaliated their injuries, in a manner that I will not take upon me either to defend or excuſe. Therefore, when we blame the Britiſh miniſtry for ſtirring up the Indians againſt us, we do not blame them for aſking aſſiſtance from other nations, which is common in all wars, when any party apprehends itſelf weak, but for a method of attack, the cruelty of which bears no proportion to any advantage that can be derived from it.

The ſame thing I ſay of proclaiming liberty to ſlaves, and ſtirring them up to rebel againſt their maſters. There is, however, ſome little difference in the application of the principle to this and the

preceding inſtance. It is probable that the people in Great Britain reckoned upon a degree of advantage from this meaſure, vaſtly ſuperior not only to what it produced in effect, but to what they themſelves expected from the incurſions of the Indians. I gather this from an expreſſion in a treatiſe publiſhed in England on the American controverſy, to this purpoſe, that 'if England declare freedom to the ſlaves, they (the Americans) have not ſix weeks to be a people.' Theſe apprehenſions may be thought to juſtify them in the attempt, as they muſt have taken it to be ſo ſpeedy and effectual a means of producing abſolute ſubmiſſion. But I muſt obſerve, in addition to what I have ſaid above, that there are ſome things ſo baſe and treacherous in their nature, and ſo pernicious in the example to human ſociety in general, that whatever effect they might be ſuppoſed to have in a particular caſe, all men of liberal minds have concurred in rejecting them. For example, though it is generally agreed, that aiming particularly at the life of a leader in battle, is not only lawful, but prudent, as it is of more conſequence than fifty others, yet to ſuborn his ſervants to aſſaſſinate him privately, though it might have the ſame effect upon the military operations, is univerſally condemned. An inſtance in hiſtory occurs to me, in which a meaſure, though likely to have a great influence in weakening the enemy, yet, for its extreme cruelty, deſerves to be ſpoken of with horror. It was that of king James VII's general at the ſiege of Londonderry, 1689, who, when the garriſon was reduced to extremity for want of proviſions, drove all the proteſtants

within thirty miles, chiefly old men, women, and infants, under the walls of the city, to be either taken in, or ſuffered to periſh with hunger under the eyes of their friends. Had this meaſure been ſucceſsful, it would have been, notwithſtanding, condemned as unjuſt; but I am happy in being able to obſerve, that acts of extreme cruelty do very ſeldom produce the effects intended by them. When a certain point is exceeded, fear itſelf is converted into rage, and produces the unexpected and incredible efforts of deſpair.

The principle I have above laid down, will alſo enable us to judge what opinion we ſhould form of acts of violence and depredation. When an army can avail itſelf of the goods and property of the members of a hoſtile ſtate, or probably reduce them to the neceſſity of making peace, not only the ſeizure, but the reduction of both may be juſtified upon the principles of reaſon. But when men can only deſtroy and not poſſeſs, and that deſtruction can only fall upon an inconſiderable number of helpleſs people, it is at once inconſiſtent with greatneſs of mind, and for the moſt part againſt the intereſt of the deſtroyer. It operates as an inflammatory principle, and calls up every man, from the ſtrongeſt to the feebleſt, to aſſiſt in repelling or puniſhing the ſavage invader. For this reaſon I give it as my opinion, that burning and deſtroying houſes, where there is no fortreſs, as has been in ſome inſtances done, deſerves all the epithets of barbarous, ſavage, and inhuman, that have been beſtowed upon it, either by thoſe who have ſuffered, or thoſe who have felt in their behalf.

A few more reflections ſhould have been added, upon wars differently circumſtanced, and particularly upon civil wars; but they muſt be referred to the next, or ſome future paper.

NUMBER III.

SIR,

MY laſt paper was employed in examining what is the radical principle, according to the law of nature and nations, for determining *the juſt and lawful means* of carrying on war. Having left the ſubject unfiniſhed, I will now add what ſeems further neceſſary upon it. The chief and moſt remarkable diſtinction of wars, to be found in civilians, is into what they call *foreign* and *civil* wars. By the firſt are to be underſtood, wars between nations confeſſed on both ſides to be ſeparate and independent. By the ſecond, wars between different parts of the ſame ſtate. The firſt are ſuppoſed to ariſe from ſome occaſional injury or partial encroachment, and to have for their end the reparation of the wrong, and the reſtoration of ſecurity and peace. The ſecond, in which one part of the ſubjects of a ſtate riſes againſt another, are much more various, both in their cauſes and ends, although the rulers of every ſtate generally affect to conſider them all as of the ſame nature, and belonging to the ſame claſs. The light in which they wiſh them to be viewed is, as an inſurrection of diſorderly citizens againſt law and order in ge-

neral, and therefore as including the greateſt crime that can be committed againſt ſociety, and deſerving the ſevereſt puniſhment. This is the true and proper import of the laws againſt treaſon in any country, and if the object on which they take hold is really ſuch as they deſcribe, no fault can be found with their ſeverity. He who breaks the public peace and attempts to ſubvert the order of the ſociety of which he is a number, is guilty of the greateſt crime againſt every other member, by robbing him of a bleſſing of the greateſt value in itſelf, as well as eſſentially neceſſary to the poſſeſſion of every other.

For this reaſon it is, that in civil wars one party takes upon itſelf to be on the ſide of order and good government, and conſiders every perſon of the oppoſing band, not as a citizen contending for the ſuppoſed rights of his own ſtate, but as a felon and a criminal, breaking the law of God and man, and if ſubdued and taken, deſtined to public ignominious, legal puniſhment. But let us conſider a little the cauſes and circumſtances of civil wars, as they have appeared in hiſtory. Some have doubtleſs been of the kind above deſcribed, and which the law in general preſumes; but if they have been numerous, they have hardly ever been formidable. Inſurrections of profligate or even miſtaken citizens have generally been local, and occaſioned by ſome circumſtances that do not affect the whole body of an empire, and therefore have been eaſily ſuppreſſed. Many of the civil wars which have torn and diſtracted great empires, have ariſen from the ambition and turbulence of particular men, contending

for power and influence in the adminiſtration of government. Such were the wars of Sylla and Marius, Cæſar and Pompey, in the Roman republic; in which, though the partiſans on both ſides were certainly criminal, yet at the ſame time, they were equally ſo. We may place in the ſame rank, the civil wars in England and France, which were ſo long in the one country, and ſo bloody in both, about the ſucceſſion to the crown. In theſe wars the principle on which they were waged, was fundamentally wrong, *viz.* that there was a claim of right in one family or perſon, which entitled them to authority diſtinct from common conſent, or the general good. But this principle was the ſame to both parties; many perſons of equal honour and truth embraced the oppoſite ſides of the queſtion; and we can perceive no difference at all between them, in point of merit or demerit towards the ſociety. If one contends for the uncle, and the other for the nephew, to be king, or the poſterity of each many generations diſtant, and a bloody war muſt decide the queſtion, little other reflection can occur to a conſiderate man, than to pity the weakneſs of human nature.

There remains another claſs of civil wars, in which a part or the great body of a monarchy or republic reſiſt the authority of their rulers, on pretence that they are ſuffering under oppreſſion. They do this ſometimes with a view to redreſs their grievances, and ſometimes to ſubvert their government altogether as inſupportable, and re-ſettle it upon a new foundation. It alſo frequently happens, that they begin with the firſt of theſe, and in the courſe

of the quarrel find or think it neceſſary to end with the laſt. There are many wars of this kind upon record, ſome of which have been ſucceſsful, and others not. If they have been ſucceſsful, hiſtory dignifies them with the name of Revolution; and if otherwiſe, they muſt bear that of Rebellion. Their ſucceſs, however, is no certain criterion of their juſtice. The civil war in England of the laſt century, which bears the name of the grand rebellion, and the late vigorous conteſt of the Corſicans againſt the republic of Genoa, though they were ſold into ſlavery, were as honourable in the principles, as the ſucceſsful reſiſtance of the Seven United Provinces to the king of Spain, or the efforts of the Engliſh nation at that period, which we have now agreed to call the *glorious revolution*.

Let us apply theſe remarks to the ſubject of our preſent enquiry, the means and manner of carrying on war. In fact, it has always been found that civil wars have been carried on with a rage and animoſity much greater than thoſe of independent nations.—Acts of cruelty have been much more frequent while they laſted; and after peace has taken place, the alienation of mind and inward reſentment has been much more great and of longer continuance. The barbarity of the Syllan and Marian factions to each other in Rome, as well as the proſcription of the two ſubſequent triumvirates of that ſtate, were ſo horrible, that it is difficult to conceive how human nature could be brought to ſuch an unfeeling and hardened temper, as to give or execute the bloody orders. As ſoon as a war between independent nations ceaſes, the wound is perfectly healed,

and particular perſons of theſe nations do not retain the leaſt reſentment againſt each other. It is quite otherwiſe in civil wars. They often give a name and character to the different factions, which is not obliterated for many generations. Whig and Torry are names by which perſons and families are ſtill diſtinguiſhed in England, although they are both of great antiquity, and the firſt of them more than a hundred years old.

Whenever any effect is general and conſtant, there muſt be ſome ſuitable and permanent cauſe or cauſes for it. It may not therefore be amiſs, either in a philoſophical or a moral view, to examine the cauſes of this phenomenon in political life. One cauſe may be aſſigned for it which is very general, but which will perfectly apply to this, as well as to every other kind of ſtrife. The greater the injury that is done, and the ſtronger the obligations to friendſhip that are broken through, the deeper the reſentment that is felt by a ſenſible mind. Now, it is certain, that to diſturb the internal peace of a ſtate by a civil war, is a much more dreadful evil, and touches the people more univerſally, than war with a foreign kingdom. Beſides, injuries done, or ſuppoſed to be done, by thoſe with whom we are nearly connected, and from whom we expected every act of friendſhip, wound more deeply than thoſe done by ſtrangers or perſons unknown. This is ſo generally true, that differences between near relations, if they come to a certain height, and are publicly known, are ſcarcely ever thoroughly reconciled. They may be apparently or imperfectly taken away, the ſore may be ſkinned

over, but it ſtill rankles at bottom, and upon the ſlighteſt touch is ready to break out anew.

Another cauſe which may be aſſigned for the barbarity exerciſed in civil wars, is the hateful or contemptible idea which the one ſide, at leaſt, often entertains of the other. It is a fine obſervation of a moral writer of the laſt age, "If you want to be wholly free from the guilt of injury, oppreſſion, or ſlander, you muſt take care what you *think* of others, for it is certain that your treatment of them will be according to the opinion you have formed of their character and merit." This remark is perfectly juſt, for if once a man allow himſelf to hate another heartily, there is no anſwering for what he will do to him, nor is the natural humanity of his diſpoſition the leaſt ſecurity againſt his going to exceſs. Perſons of the gentleſt nature and the ſofteſt ſex, when completely enraged, have been guilty of the moſt horrid cruelty. This is commonly accounted for by the mixture of fear and hatred. But if another ingredient is added to the compoſition, it will be yet more powerful; I mean contempt. Some may think that fear and contempt are inconſiſtent, but this is a miſtake. You cannot fear the ſtrength of an enemy and deſpiſe it at the ſame time; but you may eaſily fear his ſtrength and malice, and deſpiſe his character. If therefore you join all theſe together, fear, hatred, and contempt, towards an enemy, it will not be wonderful if the treatment he receives is unmerciful or unjuſt. This is often the caſe in civil wars. Thoſe who are on the ſide of government are apt to form the moſt unjuſt, as well as deſpicable ideas of their opponents, and never to ſpeak

of them but in the moſt opprobrious terms. By this they are naturally led to behave towards them with inhumanity, and ſometimes in their correſpondence they will ſcarce conſider themſelves as upon an equality, or be bound by the laws of ſincerity and truth.

I could illuſtrate the influence of character, and the opinion we entertain of others, on our conduct toward them, by many inſtances in hiſtory. It is the true and genuine ſource of the Roman Catholics not keeping faith with heretics. This their enemies charge them with as an avowed principle; which they deny. But that they have acted agreeably to it is fact. The example of John Huſs of Bohemia, and ſeveral others, put it beyond all queſtion. It is alſo the true cauſe of the cruelty of the inquiſition, commonly called the bloody Tribunal. Nothing is more common than to conſider the miniſters of this court as monſters diveſted of every feeling of humanity, and ſo to lay three fourths of the blame upon the perſonal character, whereas in truth, it ought to be wholly imputed to the power of bigotry and falſe zeal. When once a perſon is believed to be an enemy to God, and meriting his utmoſt vengeance, it is not wonderful that men ſhould co-operate with him, and inflict that little part of it that is in their power. It is not ſo properly ſuffering in itſelf, as the innocence of the ſufferer, or the diſproportion of the ſuffering to the crime, that excites our compaſſion. When crimes are very atrocious, we ſometimes feel, and in ſome degree regret, the weakneſs of human vengeance, which cannot poſſibly give them their due. I can recollect ſeveral inſtances of criminals,

on whoſe condemnation, not one but many would ſay, "he deſerves, if it were poſſible, a thouſand deaths."

But now let me draw this diſſertation to a concluſion, or as divines would ſay, to the application. It is eaſy to ſee, from the above principles, what are the dictates of truth and juſtice as to the manner of carrying on civil wars. There is but one claſs of them in which the behaviour ſhould be different from the practice that prevails in wars with independent ſtates; I mean when tumultuous and diſorderly citizens attempt to ſubvert law and order altogether. But when the grounds of the quarrel are plauſible on both ſides, and when it is demonſtrable that perſons of the ſtricteſt honour and integrity may be found adhering to the oppoſite parties, they are bound by every tie to candour in judgment, and to humanity and mercy in their conduct towards each other. Happily we often ſee the parties in ſuch wars compelled to humanity through ſelf-intereſt, and reſtrained by fear of one of the juſteſt of all laws, that of retaliation. I could wiſh, however, that a ſenſe of duty ſhould be added to this obligation; for neither neceſſity, nor even inclination, is ſo ſtable and powerful a principle of action, as reaſon and truth impreſſed on the conſcience. Neceſſity does not always ſeem equally ſtrong, and the impulſe of natural affections is tranſient and changeable; but that which we conſider as eſſential to our duty, we ſhall adhere to without the aſſiſtance of either, and ought to do it even in oppoſition to both.

I do truly think myſelf, in my preſent retirement (begging the reader's pardon) not ill qualified, in point of impartiality, for handling this ſubject, and applying it to the preſent conteſt between Great Britain and America. I am paſt the age of bearing arms, and whatever I have done before, ſhall probably never again wield any other weapons, than thoſe improperly ſo called, the tongue and the pen. I do clearly ſee the perfect juſtice and great importance of the claim on the one hand, and eaſily conceive the power of prejudice on the other. On the part of America, there was not the moſt diſtant thought of ſubverting the government, or hurting the intereſt of the people of Great Britain, but of defending their own privileges from unjuſt encroachment; there was not the leaſt deſire of withdrawing their allegiance from the common ſovereign, till it became abſolutely neceſſary, and indeed was his own choice: On the other hand, I can eaſily conceive that thoſe who have been long accuſtomed to ſubjection, and from whom it is really due, ſhould not ſuddenly enter into the reaſons of exempting a people, otherwiſe ſituated from the ſame burden. They are therefore of courſe eaſily deceived by falſe or imperfect accounts of a diſtant country, and inſenſibly biaſſed by the phraſeology conſtantly uſed, particularly the terms rebels and rebellion. Upon the whole, as I am now to diſmiſs this ſubject and proſecute the plan laid down in my firſt number, I ſhall conclude with ſaying, That humanity is the nobleſt attendant on true valour; and that he will probably fight moſt bravely, who ne-

ver fights till it is neceſſary, and ceaſes to fight as ſoon as the neceſſity is over.

NUMBER IV.

SIR,

ONE of the greateſt difficulties that occurs to writers of miſcellaneous eſſays, and which has been often complained of, is the fixing upon proper ſubjects. We are confined, as a certain writer obſerves, to 'human nature and life,' and yet theſe have been ſo completely ranſacked, and almoſt every character and occurrence has been placed in ſuch a variety of lights, that it is hardly poſſible to find a corner that is wholly untouched. At the ſame time, as to the manner of writing, the reader generally expects two things that ſeem to be incompatible and mutually deſtructive of each other. The one is, that it be ſtriking and original; and the other, that it be ſimple, natural, and obvious. If we ſay what any body might ſay, then it is a trite beaten, common-place, hackneyed topic; and if we ſay what would not readily occur to others, then it is a forced, unnatural, *out of the way* manner of thinking and writing, than which there cannot be a greater diſparagement of either writer or ſpeaker, nor any that will more ſpeedily or effectually prevent his ſucceſs. But notwithſtanding this apparent hardſhip, there is a real juſtice in the expectation of the public in both reſpects, when rightly underſtood.

A writer's ſentiments ſhould be properly his own, and yet they ſhould not be too much repugnant to other people's. And as one man's face is eaſily diſtinguiſhed from that of every other, though the general features are the ſame in all, he may preſerve his genuine character without going far *out of the way*, or aiming at any thing odd or paticular for this purpoſe. I know not how it is with others, but for my own part, I would rather write on a ſubject that has been often handled, or a character that has been often deſcribed, than one of a contrary kind; becauſe, in ſuch caſes, I can form my own ſentiments with greater preciſion, and expreſs them with greater perſpicuity and force.

The reader may conſider the above as an introduction, preface, or if he pleaſes, apology for the following diſſertation, which ſhall have for its ſubject a certain human character or quality, generally called *plain common ſenſe*. I muſt, in the firſt place, ſettle the meaning of the expreſſion. There are in every language, certain fine or nice diſtinctions in the uſe both of phraſes and ſingle terms, which, though introduced and finally ſettled by general practice, are not always attended to or fully underſtood. In the caſe before us, I think, the term is uſed very differently in the negative, from what it is in the poſitive form. When we ſay of a man, that he *wants common ſenſe*, we mean that he is a very great fool, and ſometimes that he is the next thing to a changeling or ideot. But when, in the poſitive form, we ſay of a man, that he is a man of *plain common ſenſe*, we give him a good character, and are underſtood by it as affirming, that there are not many ſuperior or

equal to him in that particular, as alſo that he poſſeſſes a quality of no inconſiderable value. It is plain, that in theſe two ways of ſpeaking, the term common ſenſe ſtands for different things. In the firſt of them it ſignifies, that ſenſe that is really common to all men, or at leaſt nearly univerſal: in the ſecond, it ſignifies either ſomething totally different, or at leaſt a degree of that ſenſe which is not poſſeſſed by the plurality, but perhaps is called common, becauſe it may be found in ſome perſons of every rank.

Let me now enquire a little into the characters of common ſenſe. It is the *gift of nature*, and may be clearly diſtinguiſhed from what is acquired by ſtudy or application. In the thoughts on various ſubjects, by Swift and Pope, we have one to this purpoſe, that 'fine ſenſe, is not half ſo uſeful as common ſenſe, for he that has the one without the other, is like one that carries nothing about him but gold coin, who muſt be often at a loſs for want of change.' In another of theſe thoughts we are informed, 'that to attempt to move the multitude with fine ſenſe, is like attempting to hew a block with a razor.' With all reſpect to theſe great men, I muſt ſay, that though there is ſomething ſmart and lively in the above recited ſentiments, yet they are more brilliant than juſt; they ſeem to ſuppoſe, that refinement is a thing of the ſame kind with common ſenſe, and only higher in degree, and yet at the ſame time that a man may poſſeſs genuine refinement and be without common ſenſe, neither of which, in my opinion, is true, at leaſt in ſuch a ſenſe as to make their ſimilitudes juſt, or their reaſoning

concluſive. Refinement is as different from common ſenſe as the culture is from the ſoil, or the climate from either; but as their joint influence is neceſſary to the production of the crop, ſo fine ſenſe, without common ſenſe as its ground work and foundation, very ill deſerves the name. If I ſaw a man attempting to hew a block with a razor, or heard him ſpeaking in metaphyſical, abſtract, unintelligible terms, to a multitude of common people, I ſhould heartily agree that he wanted common ſenſe; but that he poſſeſſed fine ſenſe, I ſhould not be eaſily brought to confeſs.

The uſe of ſcientific terms and ſentiments, brought from what is known only to ſcholars and improperly introduced, has been long treated with the contempt it deſerves; but it is conſidered as belonging only to the learned profeſſions. I was well acquainted with a divine many years ago, who began a prayer in his congregation with theſe words, 'O Lord, thou art the ſimpleſt of all beings,' which incenſed his hearers againſt him to ſuch a degree, that they accuſed him of having ſpoken blaſphemy; whereas the poor man only meant to ſay, that God was philoſophically ſimple and uncompounded, altogether different from the groſſneſs, diviſibility, or, as it is ſometimes more learnedly called, the diſcerptibility of matter. I was alſo acquainted with a phyſician, who, ſitting with a lady in her own houſe, and being aſked by her, 'Doctor, are artichokes good for children?' anſwered, 'Madam, they are the leaſt flatulent of all the eſculent tribe,' indeed, doctor, ſays the lady, I do not underſtand a word of what you have ſaid. Now, I think, few would have much admired either the fine or com-

mon ſenſe of theſe gentlemen, though certainly the divine would have been conſidered as the greater fool of the two; for phyſicians, as a body, have aſſerted and maintained their right to the uſe of hard phraſes beyond any other claſs of ſcholars. But there is a certain ſpecies of this fault, which, I think, has not been much taken notice of; and that is, when men, either of high ſtation or real ſenſe and literature, are filled with ſelf-ſufficiency, and cannot think of deſcending to the level of thoſe with whom they converſe, either in ſentiments or phraſeology. I ſuſpect there were a few grains of this failing in the illuſtrious perſons not long ago mentioned; and that their ſentiments, above related, are an evidence of it. In this inſtance, their fine ſenſe was an over-match for their common ſenſe, and this was an evident proof of the imperfection of both.

If then fine ſenſe does not differ eſſentially from common ſenſe, and the firſt is nothing more than a certain brightneſs or poliſh given to the laſt, it would ſeem as if by common ſenſe we ought to underſtand the rational powers in general, and the *capacity* of improvement. But here we meet with a difficulty which ſeems to need a reſolution. If common ſenſe is nothing elſe but the ſtrength of the intellectual powers taken complexly, then muſt it be in every perſon in proportion to thoſe powers; and ſcience if it does not improve, certainly cannot diminiſh it. Yet there is no branch of ſcience whatever but we find ſome perſons capable of learning it, and frequently even of ſhining in it, who are notwithſtanding very defective in common ſenſe, and after their learned acquiſitions, the defect is either

greater in itself, or at least more visible than before. We find many who learn the dead languages to great perfection, who learn arithmetic, geometry, natural philosophy, rhetoric, politics, who even become eminent in some of them, and tolerably skilled in all, whom yet we reckon greatly inferior to more ignorant persons, in clear, sound, common sense.

Perhaps it may be thought that these ignorant persons only wanted the opportunity of improvement, and would have excelled the others also in literature had they applied to it. This I do not find to be the case, from the instances in which a trial has been made. Doubtless there are some examples of persons eminently possessed of judgment or common sense, as well as capable of acquiring skill in the sciences; but these talents are by no means the same, or in direct proportion to one another. I have known persons who seemed capable of learning any thing, and who did know a great deal upon many subjects, who yet had such a comical cast in their general behaviour, that it was not easy to avoid smiling at their speech and conduct. I have even known persons, male and female, with whom you could find no fault, but that their carriage and conversation were too complete and perfect at all times, and yet we suspected them of folly, merely because they were free from the follies and irregularities of others. I remember an instance, in early life, of my being in company, for the first time, with a certain young lady, and after a few minutes, she asked me a very judicious question upon the character and history of Augustus Cæsar, which made me immediately suspect, that

ſhe was not quite ſound; whereas, if ſhe had only ſaid it was a fine day after the rain, or uttered any ſuch wiſe and pertinent reflection, I ſhould have concluded nothing to her prejudice. On the other hand, there are many inſtances of perſons who have made trial of ſtudy and ſcience with very little ſucceſs, and who, giving them up, have applied to active life, and have deſervedly acquired the character of clear headed, ſenſible, judicious men. The truth is, the diſtinction between literature and common ſenſe, ſeems to be well known and generally acknowledged. There are ſome who evidently give way to, or even affect an abſence of mind, from forgetfulneſs and inattention to what they are about, and expect we ſhould conſider it as an indication of profound ſtudy and deep learning. This is one of the moſt ridiculous pieces of affectation imaginable. Such gentlemen, if they be logicians, ſhould be told that *a particulari ad univerſale non valet conſequentia.* We know very well that ſome great ſcholars are fools, but this will never prove that all fools are great ſcholars. Upon the whole, it ſeems that ſcience, or a capacity for it, is not common ſenſe.

Since then common ſenſe is a gift of nature, different from a capacity for ſcience in general, ſhall we ſay that it is genius, including particularly thoſe exalted and admired talents which have been, by ſome of the lateſt writers, called the powers of imagination. Here we are further from the point than ever, for great wit and a lively imagination are rather conſidered as oppoſed to judgment and prudence, and other happy fruits of common ſenſe.

So much is this the caſe, that the poet has been often cited with approbation, who ſays,

> " Great wit to madness sure is near allied,
> And thin partitions do their bounds divide."

It is common to ſay, that ſuch a man has more ſail than ballaſt, meaning that his imagination, fire and ſprightlineſs are an overmatch for his prudence, and clearly carrying the ſuppoſition, that this laſt quality is as oppoſite to the others, as ſail is to ballaſt, or even motion to reſt. To all this may be added, that ſome who really were, and many who deſired to be thought, men of great genius, have actually claimed it as their right, not to be confined to common forms, and indeed have generally acted accordingly.

We have ſeen then that refinement, ſcience, genius, are not common ſenſe, ſhall we now go any further? Is there not a character in which there is knowledge of the moſt liberal kind, clearneſs of underſtanding, penetration of mind upon every ſubject, and yet a weakneſs or want of common ſenſe, in conduct and behaviour? Are there not ſome who ſeem to have, not only all other ſenſes, but common ſenſe too, for every body but themſelves? They can immediately and readily diſcover the miſtakes of others, they can give the beſt and ſoundeſt advice upon every ſubject, and yet never could act a wiſe part themſelves on any ſubject. Some who are even connoiſſeurs in œconomy, never can keep their own affairs in tolerable order. I have known a gentleman who reduced himſelf to beggary by fooliſh projects, yet, after having ſold his pater-

nal inheritance, he employed himself in thinking and writing on that subject on which he had acted wrong, and published essays on agriculture, modestly pointing out to gentlemen and farmers by how small a portion of land, well improved, they might speedily acquire a plentiful estate.

Upon comparing all these observations together, I beg leave to lay down a few propositions which appear to be nearest the truth in the way of theory or system, and on them to ground a few practical advices. There seem to be three separate qualities of the human mind very well expressed in the old philosophy, by the three known terms of memory, imagination and judgment. These are truly distinct one from another; for any one of them may not only exist, but be in high perfection, in the absence of both the others. This will not I think, be doubted as to the two first, and even as to the last, I have known some persons not only without imagination as a talent, but with very little taste for works of imagination, and whose memory was no ways remarkable, who have passed through life with great dignity and credit, who, with or without learning, have conducted their own affairs with prudence and discretion, and discovered the highest sense of propriety and decorum in all their intercourse with others, under the happy guidance of plain common sense.

In the next place, though these qualities are distinct, they are by no means incompatible. There have been instances of persons who possessed all the three in high perfection; and there must be a con-

ſiderable proportion of each to form a character truly illuſtrious. Some, in whom imagination has been very ſtrong, have alſo been remarkable for clearneſs of judgment in their works, good ſenſe and prudence in their whole deportment. The ſame thing I ſay of memory. Some prodigies of memory have been defective in judgment; but many great men have alſo excelled in this reſpect, and no ſmall meaſure of it is neceſſary both in works of genius and the functions of public life. Again,

Of theſe three qualities, judgment is by far the moſt valuable and important. Of itſelf it is amiable and reſpectable, while the others, without it, are contemptible uſeleſs, or hurtful. A man of memory, without judgment, is a fool; and a man of imagination, without judgment, is mad; but when this great quality takes the government of both, they acquire luſtre, and command univerſal eſteem. No human accompliſhment, unleſs it has this as its foundation and ground work, can reach perfection, even in its own kind. Memory will make a linguiſt, imagination will make a poet, penetration will make a philoſopher, public life will make a politician, and court breeding will make a man of faſhion; yet all of them are eſſentially defective, if common ſenſe is weak or wanting. There is ſomething in the application and direction of all theſe accompliſhments which judgment muſt ſupply, and which neither inſtruction, example, nor even experience will beſtow.

It is probable that many would readily grant me (what yet I do not aſk, being hardly of the ſame opinion) that of all the characters juſt now men-

tioned, that of a man of fashion or politeness is the most superficial, and what may be most easily attained by imitation and habit. Yet even here, nothing is more easy than to see the dominion of judgment and good sense, or the prevalence of folly and indiscretion. That want of presence of mind or embarrassment, which is often the effect of modesty or bashfulness, nay, even the errors and blunders which visibly proceed from ignorance and mistake of the reigning mode, are not half so absurd and ridiculous, as the affected airs and misplaced ceremonies of a fop, of which the ladies are always most attentive observers, and to give them their due, generally not incompetent judges.

Once more, judgment is an original and radical quality, that is of all others least capable of being communicated by instruction, or even approved or agumented by culture. Memory and imagination are also gifts of nature; but they may be greatly increased, the one by exercise, and the other by indulgence. You may teach a man any thing in the world but prudence, which is the genuine offspring of common sense. It is generally said that experience teaches fools, but the meaning of the proverb is often mistaken, for it does not signify that experience makes them wise: it signifies that they never are wise at all, but persist in spite of instruction, warning and example, till they feel the effects of their own folly. If a man is born with a fund of good sense and natural discernment, it will appear in the very first stages of his education. He who outstrips his fellows in a grammar school, will not always be the greatest scholar in advanced life; but

he who does not discover discernment and sagacity when a boy, will never be distinguished for it so long as he lives. It is often said, in a certain country, that a fool of forty will never be wise; which is sometimes understood as if a man made as regular a progress to the summit of his wisdom, till the age of forty, as he does to that of his stature till twenty; which is a very great mistake. I take it to be in this case, as in the other, that a man of forty has sufficiently proved to all the world that he is not, and therefore that he never was, and never will be wise.

Shall we say then that this most valuable of all human qualities receives no benefit at all from a well conducted education, from study, or from an acquaintance with the world. I answer, that I do not think it is capable of any change in its nature, or addition to its vigour, but it may be joined to other talents of more or less value, and it may be applied to purposes more or less useful and important, and thence acquire a lustre and polish, of which it would otherwise be destitute. The same good sense and prudence, which alone would make a sensible judicious farmer, would, if united to memory and imagination, and enriched with skill in the liberal arts, make an eminent scholar, and bring in large contributions to the treasury of human science. The same soundness of judgment, which, in a country life or contracted neighbourhood, would set an example of frugality, be an enemy to disorder, and point out the possessor as a proper umpire in unhappy dissentions; would in a more enlarged sphere, make an accomplished senator or a politician, to

manage the affairs of a large community, or ſettle the differences of contending nations.

I come now to offer my readers ſome advices, a practice to which I am by nature and habit exceedingly prone. A difficulty, it muſt be confeſſed, ſeems to occur in this matter. If the above theory be juſt, there ſeems to be little room left for advice, as the great talent, ſo largely deſcribed, is ſuppoſed to be original and unalterable. This difficulty, however, notwithſtanding, important inſtruction may be grafted upon it, not only to parents and others who have the charge of the education of youth, but to every man, for the future direction of his own conduct.

As to the firſt of theſe, I would entreat parents to guard againſt that fond partiality which inclines them to form a wrong judgment of the capacity of their children; particularly it were to be wiſhed, that they would not take a few ſallies of pertneſs and vivacity for an evidence of diſtinguiſhed parts. It is well known, and has been frequently obſerved, how apt parents are to entertain their viſitors with an account of the bright ſayings or ſhrewd ſchemes of their children, as moſt promiſing ſymptoms of their future talents; and yet ſo far as my obſervation reaches, the things related might for the moſt part juſtify a contrary ſuppoſition. I ſhould run little riſk in affirming, that three-fourths at leaſt of thoſe anecdotes, which parents relate with ſo much triumph of their children, are to be accounted for from memory, or petulance, or even ſtupidity. A child will repeat, at an improper time, a phraſe or remark that he has heard, and it will make ſo ab-

ſurd a contraſt with what is going on, that it is impoſſible to forbear laughing. I aſk whether this is an evidence of the greatneſs or the want of underſtanding in the child? Another will give an inſolent and ſaucy anſwer, and acquire great reputation for what deſerved the moſt ſevere and exemplary correction. To crown all, I will tell a true ſtory: An old gentleman, whom I knew, would often ſay, in commendation of his ſon's wiſdom, then a boy about ten or twelve years of age, That when other boys are breaking their legs by falls from limbs of trees, or going a fiſhing in rivers, at the riſk of being drowned, his ſon would fiſh a whole afternoon with a crooked pin, in a tub of foul water in the kitchen. I ſuppoſe any reader will agree, that the fact and the remark taken together, conſtitute a full proof that the mother was honeſt, and the ſon lawfully begotten.

It would be a great advantage, that parents ſhould make a moderate eſtimation of the talents of their children in two reſpects. (1.) It would preſerve the children themſelves from being puffed up with unmerited praiſe, and thus miſtaking their own character and capacity. Though the native force and vigour of common ſenſe can neither be augmented nor deſtroyed, yet it may be, and I believe frequently is neglected and deſpiſed, or overgrown by the rank weeds of oſtentation and ſelf-ſufficiency. When young perſons are vain of the talents which they do not poſſeſs, or ambitious of a character which they cannot attain, they become ridiculous in their conduct, and are generally unſucceſsful in their purſuits. (2.) It would incline and

make their parents to conduct their education in the most proper manner, by giving particular attention to those branches of instruction, which though less splendid, are more generally useful than some others. It would lead me too much into detail to give many examples for the illustration of this remark, and therefore I shall only say, that common sense, which is a modest unassuming quality, and a diligent application to the useful parts of science, will neither distress nor weaken a fervent imagination, when it really resides in the same subject; but giving loose reins to a warm imagination, will often overset a moderate degree of judgment, so that it will never more dare to shew its head. I have known some youths of bright genius in their own esteem, who have looked down with great contempt upon quiet and orderly boys as dull plodding fellows, and yet these last have, in the issue, become men of spirit and capacity, as well as literature, while the others have evaporated into rakes and bullies, and indeed blockheads; or taking the road to Mount Helicon, have become poets, fools, and beggars.

I must advise every reader, especially those in early years, to form his opinion of others, and his friendly attachments, upon the principles above laid down, nothing will more effectually mislead young persons, than an excessive admiration of showy talents in those with whom they converse, whether they be real or supposed. I have known many instances of persons who apparently owed their ruin, to their imbibing early in life, a notion that decency, order, and a prudent management of their

affairs, were marks of dulneſs; and on the contrary, that petulance, forwardneſs, and irregularity, and even vicious exceſſes, were the effects of ſpirit and capacity. Many follow the leading perſon in frolics, not from any inward approbation of ſuch practices, but merely to avoid the reproach which in ſuch ſocieties is ſo unjuſtly beſtowed. I beg all ſuch to believe me, as a perſon of ſome experience in places of public education, when I aſſure them, that in nine inſtances out of ten, your ramblers, night-walkers, and miſchief-workers, are block-heads and thick-ſculls. Does it require any genius, think you, to throw a log in another's way in a dark paſſage, and after he has ſtumbled over it, to raiſe a triumphant laugh at him, who was ſuch a fool as not to ſee without light.

I conclude with obſerving, that whatever may be the capacity of any perſon in itſelf, if it is neglected or miſimproved, it will either be wholly loſt or be of little conſequence in future life. Our very bodily frame preſents us with a leſſon of inſtruction upon this ſubject. Though formed by nature complete and regular, if it is accuſtomed to any improper torture or ungraceful motion, the habit will ſoon become unconquerable; and any particular limb or member that for a long time is not uſed, will become uſeleſs. This holds yet more ſtrongly as to the powers of the mind: they are loſt by negligence; but by proper application they are preſerved, improved, and in many caſes increaſed. Let all, therefore, who wiſh or hope to be eminent, remember, that as the height to which you can raiſe a tower depends upon the ſize and ſolidity of

its baſe, ſo they ought to lay the foundation of their future fame deep and ſtrong, in ſobriety, prudence, and patient induſtry, which are the genuine dictates of *plain common ſenſe*.

NUMBER V.

SIR,

A MAN is not, even at this time, called or conſidered as a ſcholar, unleſs he is acquainted in ſome degree with the ancient languages, particularly the Greek and Latin. About one hundred and fifty years ago, however, thoſe languages were better underſtood than they are at preſent; becauſe at that time, authors of reputation publiſhed almoſt all their works in Latin. Since the period above mentioned, the modern, or as they are ſometimes called, the northern languages, have been gradually poliſhed, and each nation has manifeſted a zeal for, and an attention to, the purity and perfection of its own tongue. This has been the caſe, particularly with reſpect to the French and Engliſh. The French language is, as nearly as I can gueſs, about fifty years before the Engliſh, in this reſpect; that is to ſay, it is ſo much longer ſince their men of letters applied themſelves to the aſcertaining, correcting, and poliſhing of it. The Engliſh, however, has received great improvements within the laſt hundred years, and probably will continue to do ſo. He muſt have little judgment, or great ob-

ſtinacy, who does not confeſs that ſome late authors have written the Engliſh language with greater purity, than thoſe of the firſt character in former times. From this we may certainly infer, that the education muſt be very imperfect in any ſeminary where no care is taken to form the ſcholars to taſte, propriety, and accuracy in that language which they muſt ſpeak and write all their life afterwards.

To theſe reflections it may be added, that our ſituation in America is now, and in all probability will continue to be ſuch, as to require peculiar attention upon this ſubject. The Engliſh language is ſpoken through all the United States. We are at a great diſtance from the iſland of Great Britain, in which the ſtandard of the language is as yet ſuppoſed to be found. Every ſtate is equal to, and independent of, every other; and, I believe, none of them will agree, at leaſt immediately, to receive laws from another, in diſcourſe, any more than in action. Time and accident muſt determine what turn affairs will take in this reſpect in future, whether we ſhall continue to conſider the language of Great Britain as the pattern upon which we are to form ours; or whether, in this new empire, ſome centre of learning and politeneſs will not be found, which ſhall obtain influence, and preſcribe the rules of ſpeech and writing to every other part.

While this point is yet unſettled, it has occurred to me to make ſome obſervations upon the preſent ſtate of the Engliſh language in America, and to attempt a collection of ſome of the chief improprieties which prevail, and might be eaſily corrected. I will premiſe one or two general remarks.

The vulgar in America ſpeak much better than the vulgar in Great Britain, for a very obvious reaſon, *viz.* that being much more unſettled, and moving frequently from place to place, they are not ſo liable to local peculiarities, either in accent or phraſeology. There is a greater difference in dialect between one county and another in Britain, than there is between one ſtate and another in America. I ſhall alſo admit, though with ſome heſitation, that gentlemen and ſcholars in Great Britain ſpeak as much with the vulgar in common chit chat, as perſons of the ſame claſs do in America: but there is a remarkable difference in their public and ſolemn diſcourſes. I have heard in this country, in the ſenate, at the bar, and from the pulpit, and ſee daily in diſſertations from the preſs, errors in grammar, improprieties and vulgariſms, which hardly any perſon of the ſame claſs, in point of rank and literature, would have fallen into in Great Britain. Curioſity led me to make a collection of theſe, which, as ſoon as it became large, convinced me that they were of very different kinds, and therefore muſt be reduced to a conſiderable number of claſſes, in order to their being treated with critical juſtice. Theſe I now preſent to the public under the following heads, to each of which I will ſubjoin a ſhort explication, and a number of examples, with remarks where they ſeem neceſſary.

1. Americaniſms, or ways of ſpeaking peculiar to this country.
2. Vulgariſms in England and America.
3. Vulgariſms in America only.

4. Local phraſes or terms.
5. Common blunders ariſing from ignorance.
6. Cant phraſes.
7. Perſonal blunders.
8. Technical terms introduced into the language.

It will be proper to put the reader in mind, that he ought not to expect that the enumeration under each of theſe heads can be complete. This would have required a very long courſe of obſervation; and indeed is not neceſſary to my purpoſe, which is by ſpecimens to enable every attentive and judicious perſon to make obſervations for himſelf.

1. The firſt claſs I call Americaniſms, by which I underſtand an uſe of phraſes or terms, or a conſtruction of ſentences, even among perſons of rank and education, different from the uſe of the ſame terms or phraſes, or the conſtruction of ſimilar ſentences, in Great Britain. It does not follow, from a man's uſing theſe, that he is ignorant, or his diſcourſe upon the whole inelegant; nay, it does not follow in every caſe, that the terms or phraſes uſed are worſe in themſelves, but merely that they are of American and not of Engliſh growth. The word Americaniſm, which I have coined for the purpoſe, is exactly ſimilar in its formation and ſignification to the word Scotticiſm. By the word Scotticiſm is underſtood any term or phraſe, and indeed any thing either in conſtruction, pronunciation, or accentuation, that is peculiar to North Britain. There are many inſtances in which the Scotch way is as good, and ſome in which every perſon who has the leaſt taſte as to the propriety or

purity of language in general, muſt confeſs that it is better than that of England, yet ſpeakers and writers muſt conform to cuſtom.

Scotland, or the northern part of Great Britain, was once a ſeparate independent kingdom, though, except in the Highlands, the people ſpoke the ſame language as in England; the inhabitants of the Lowlands, in both countries, having been originally the ſame It is juſtly obſerved by Dr. Robertſon, in his hiſtory of Scotland, that had they continued ſeparate kingdoms, ſo that there ſhould have been a court and parliament at Edinburgh, to ſerve as a ſtandard, the ſmall differences in dialect, and even in pronunciation, would not have been conſidered as defects; and there would have been no more opprobrium attending the uſe of them in ſpeech or writing, than there was in the uſe of the different dialects of the ancient Grecian republics. But by the removal of the court to London, and eſpecially by the union of the two kingdoms, the Scottiſh manner of ſpeaking came to be conſidered as provincial barbariſm; which, therefore, all ſcholars are now at the utmoſt pains to avoid. It is very probable, that the reverſe of this, or rather its counter part, will happen in America. Being entirely ſeparated from Britain, we ſhall find ſome centre or ſtandard of our own, and not be ſubject to the inhabitants of that iſland, either in receiving new ways of ſpeaking, or rejecting the old.

The examples follow.

1. "The United States, or *either* of them." This is ſo far from being a mark of ignorance, that it is uſed by many of the moſt able and accurate

ſpeakers and writers, yet it is not Engliſh. The United States are thirteen in number, but in Engliſh either does not ſignify one of many, but *one or the other* of two. I imagine *either* has become an adjective pronoun, by being a ſort of abbreviation of a ſentence, where it is uſed adverbially, *either the one or the other*. It is exactly the ſame with ἑκατέρος in Greek, and *alterutur* in Latin.

2. This is to *notify* the public; or the people had not been *notified*. By this is meant *inform* and *informed*. In Engliſh we do not notify the perſon of the thing, but notify the thing to the perſon. In this inſtance there is certainly an impropriety, *for to notify*, is juſt ſaying by a word of Latin derivation, *to make known*. Now if you cannot ſay this is to make the public known, neither ought you to ſay this is to notify the public.

3. *Fellow Countrymen*. This is a word of very frequent uſe in America. It has been heard in public orations from men of the firſt character, and may be daily ſeen in newſpaper publications. It is an evident tautology, for the laſt word expreſſes fully the meaning of both. If you open any dictionary, you will find the word countryman ſignifies one born in the ſame country. You may ſay, fellow citizens, fellow ſoldiers, fellow ſubjects, fellow Chriſtians, but not *fellow countrymen*.

4. Theſe things were ordered delivered to the army. The words *to be* are omitted. I am not certain whether this is a local expreſſion or general in America.

5. I wiſh we could contrive it to Philadelphia. The words *to carry*, *to have it carried*, or ſome ſuch,

are wanting. It is a defective construction, of which there are but too many that have already obtained in practice, in spite of all the remonstrances of men of letters.

6. We may *hope* the assistance of God. The word *for* or *to receive* is wanting. In this instance, hope, which is a neuter verb, is turned into the active verb, and not very properly as to the objective term assistance. It must be admitted, however, that in some old English poets, hope is sometimes used as an active verb, but it is contrary to modern practice.

7. I do not consider myself equal to this task. The word *as* is wanting. I am not certain whether this may not be an Englishism vulgarism, for it is frequently used by the renowned author of Common Sense, who is an Englishman born; but he has so happy a talent of adopting the blunders of others, that nothing decisive can be inferred from his practice. It is, however, undoubtedly an Americanism, for it is used by authors greatly superior to him in every respect.

8 Neither to day *or* to morrow. The proper construction is, either the one or the other, neither the one *nor* the other.

9. A *certain* Thomas Benson. The word certain, as used in English, is an indefinite, the name fixes it precisely, so that there is a kind of contradiction in the expression. In England they would say, a certain person called or supposed to be Thomas Benson.

10. Such bodies are *incident* to these evils. The

evil is incident or ready to fall upon the perſon, the perſon liable or ſubject to the evil.

11. He is a very *clever* man. She is quite a *clever* woman. How often are theſe phraſes to be heard in converſation? Their meaning, however, would certainly be miſtaken when heard for the firſt time by one born in Britain. In theſe caſes, Americans generally mean by *clever*, only goodneſs of diſpoſition, worthineſs, integrity, without the leaſt regard to capacity; nay, if I am not miſtaken, it is frequently applied, where there is an acknowledged ſimplicity, or mediocrity of capacity. But in Britain, clever always means capacity, and may be joined either to a good or bad diſpoſition. We ſay of a man, he is a clever man, a clever tradesman, a clever fellow, without any reflection upon his moral character, yet at the ſame time it carries no approbation of it. It is exceeding good Engliſh, and very common to ſay, He is a clever fellow, but I am ſorry to ſay it, he is alſo a great rogue. When cleverneſs is applied primarily to conduct, and not to the perſon, it generally carries in it the idea of art or chicanery, not very honourable; for example—Such a plan I confeſs was very clever, *i. e.* ſly, artful, well contrived, but not very fair.

12. I was quite mad at him, he made me quite mad. In this inſtance mad is only a metaphor for angry. This is perhaps an Engliſh vulgariſm, but it is not found in any accurate writer, nor uſed by any good ſpeaker, unleſs when poets or orators uſe it as a ſtrong figure, and to heighten the expreſſion, ſay, he was mad with rage.

Theſe ſhall ſuffice for the firſt claſs.

NUMBER VI.

SIR,

I PROCEED now upon the plan laid down in my laſt paper, to the ſecond general claſs of improprieties, *viz.* vulgariſms in England and America. Of theſe there is great plenty to be found every where, in writing and in converſation. They need very little explication, and indeed would ſcarcely deſerve to be mentioned in a diſcourſe of this nature, were it not for the circumſtance hinted at in the introduction, that ſcholars and public perſons are at leſs pains to avoid them here, than in Britain.

1. I will mention the vulgar abbreviations in general, as an't, can't, han't, don't, ſhouldn't, would'nt couldn't, &c. Great pains were taken by the Spectator to ſhew the barbarity and inelegance of that manner of ſpeaking and writing. The endeavours of that author, and others of later date, have been ſucceſsful in Britain, and have baniſhed all ſuch harſh and mutilated phraſes from public ſpeaking, ſo that they remain only in converſation, and not even in that among perſons of judgment and taſte. I need hardly ſay how far this is from being the caſe in America.

2. I *know'd* him perfectly well, for, I *knew* him.

3. I *ſee* him yeſterday, or I *ſee* him laſt week, for

I *saw* him. In Scotland the vulgar say, I *seed* him last week.

4. *This here* report of *that there* committee. Some merchants whom I could name, in the English Parliament, whose wealth and not merit raised them to that dignity, use this vulgarism very freely, and expose themselves to abundance of ridicule by so doing.

5. He was *drownded* in the Delaware. This is so common, that I have known a gentleman reading it in a book to a company, though it was printed *drowned*, read *drownded*.

6. She has got a new *gownd*. This and the former are vulgarisms in conversation only; but even there very improper and unbecoming for persons of education. In London you are sometimes asked if you will take a glass of *wind*, for wine. Of the same nature are an impertinent *feller*, for *fellow; waller*, for *wallow ; winder*, for *window*.

7. Some on'em, one on'em, many on'em. This though frequent in the northern parts of England, and some parts of America, perhaps is rather local, than general. This indeed may be the case with several others which have fallen under my observation.

8. It *lays* in Buck's county, for it *lies*, &c. This is not only a prevailing vulgarism in conversation, but has obtained in public speaking, and may be often seen in print. I am even of opinion that it has some chance of overcoming all the opposition made to it, and fully establishing itself by custom, which is the final arbiter in all such cases. Lowth in his grammar, has been at much pains to correct it

yet, though that moſt excellent treatiſe has been in the hands of the public for many years, this word ſeems to gain inſtead of loſing ground. The error ariſes from confounding the neuter verb to *ly* with the active verb to *lay*, which are very different in the preſent, preterite and participle. The firſt of them is formed thus, ly, lay, lien or lain: the ſecond, lay, laid, laid.

9. I *thinks* it will not be long before he come. This is a London vulgariſm, and yet one of the groſſeſt kind. To this confuſion or diſagreement of the perſon may be added the diſagreement of the number, giving a verb ſingular to a nominative plural, which is more frequent than the other, as, after all the *ſtories* that *has* been told, all the *reaſons* that *has* been given.

10. Equally *as* well, and equally *as* good. This is frequent in converſation and public ſpeaking. It is alſo to be found in ſome publications, of which it is needleſs to name the authors; but it is juſt as good Engliſh to ſay, the *moſt higheſt* mountain in America.

11. One of the moſt common vulgariſms or blunders in the Engliſh language, is putting the preterite for the participle. This is taken particular notice of by Lowth, in his grammar, as after he had *fell* down, for *fallen*; and in the ſame manner, *roſe*, for *riſen*; *ſpoke*, for *ſpoken*; *wrote*, for *written*, *broke*, for *broken*. Some of theſe appear, as he obſerves, barbarous to ſcholars; others we are ſo accuſtomed to, that they give little offence to the ear. Had not a gentleman *threw* out—the reaſons of proteſt were *drew* up. Theſe are offenſive, but you may

meet with similar errors even in good authors, such as I had *wrote*, I had *spoke*, the bone was *broke*. The best way to judge of this impropriety, is to try it upon a word that has been seldom so misused, as for example, If you go to the battle perhaps you will be *slew*.

12. Just as you *rise* the hill—little or no breadcorn is *grown* in this country. These are similar corruptions arising from turning neuter into active or passive verbs. They are also, if I am not mistaken, among the newest corruptions of the language, and much more common in England than America. The above two examples are taken from Cook's first voyage by Hawkesworth, where some others of the same kind are to be found.

13. I *sat* out yesterday morning, for I set out. The verb set has no change of termination, the present, preterite and participle being the same. I set out immediately; I set out three days sooner than he; after I had set out. The error lies in taking the preterite of the verb *sit*, and making use of it for the past time of the other—sit has three terminations, sit, sat, sitten.

14. He said *as how* it was his opinion. This absurd pleonasm is more common in Britain than in America.

The third class consists of vulgarisms in America only. This must be understood, so far as I have been able to observe, and perhaps some of them are local. It will not be necessary either to make the examples on this head numerous, or to say much upon them, because the introduction of vul-

gariſms into writing or public diſcourſes is the ſame, whether they are of one country or another.

1. I have not done it yet, but am juſt going to. This is an imperfect conſtruction; it wants the words *do it*. Imperfect conſtructions are the blemiſh of the Engliſh language in general, and rather more frequent in this country than in England.

2. It is *partly all* gone, it is *moſtly all* gone. This is an abſurdity or barbariſm, as well as a vulgariſm.

3. This is the weapon with which he defends himſelf when he is *attacted*, for attacked; or according to the abbreviation, attack'd.

4. As I told Mr. ——, for as I told you. I hope Mr. —— is well this morning. What is Mr. ——'s opinion upon this ſubject? This way of ſpeaking to one who is preſent in the third perſon, and as if he were abſent, is uſed in this country by way of reſpect. No ſuch thing is done in Britain, except that to perſons of very high rank, they ſay your majeſty, your grace, your lordſhip; yet even there the continuance of the diſcourſe in the third perſon is not cuſtomary.

5. I have been *to* Philadelphia, for *at* or *in* Philadelphia; I have been *to* dinner, for I have dined.

6. Walk *in* the houſe, for *into* the houſe.

7. You *have no right* to pay it, where right is uſed for what logicians would call the correlative term obligation.

8. A *ſpell* of ſickneſs, a long *ſpell*, a bad *ſpell*. Perhaps this word is borrowed from the ſea dialect.

9. *Every* of theſe ſtates; *every* of them; *every* of us; for *every one*. I believe the word every is uſed

in this manner in some old English writers, and also in some old laws, but not in modern practice. The thing is also improper, because it should be every one to make it strictly a partitive and subject to the same construction, as some of them, part of them, many of them, &c. yet it must be acknowledged, that there is no great impropriety, if so great, in the vulgar construction of *every*, than in another expression very common in both countries, viz. *all of them*.

Having finished these two classes, I shall make a remark or two upon vulgarisms in general. Probably many will think and say, that it would be a piece of stiffness or affectation to avoid them wholly in conversation or common discourse. As to some of those which have been described above, perhaps this may be admitted; but as to the greatest part, it is certainly best to avoid them wholly, lest we should fall into them inadvertently where they would be highly improper. If a gentleman will not imitate a peasant male or female, in saying *if so be*, and *forsooth*, and many other such phrases, because he knows they are vulgarisms, why should he imitate them in saying *equally as good*, or I see *him yesterday*, but because he does not know, or does not attend to the impropriety.

The reader is also desired to observe, that we are not by far so much in danger of the charge of affectation for what we omit saying, as for what we do say. When a man is fond of introducing hard words, or studies a nice or pompous diction, he brings himself immediately into contempt; but he may easily attain a cautious habit of avoiding low phrases or vulgar

terms without being at all liable to the imputation either of vanity or conſtraint.

I conclude with obſerving, that as bombaſt and empty ſwelling is the danger to which thoſe are expoſed who aim at ſublimity, ſo low ſentiments and vulgar terms are what thoſe are in moſt danger of, who aim at ſimplicity. Now, as it is my intention, in the courſe of theſe papers, to ſet a mark of reprobation upon every affected and fantaſtic mode of expreſſion, and to recommend a pure, and, as it may be called, claſſic ſimplicity, it is the more neceſſary to guard the reader againſt that low and grovelling manner which is ſometimes miſtaken for it.

NUMBER VII.

SIR,

THE fourth claſs of improprieties conſiſt of *local phraſes* or *terms*. By theſe I mean ſuch vulgariſms as prevail in one part of a country and not in another. There is a much greater variety of theſe in Britain than in America. From the complete populations of the country, multitudes of common people never remove to any diſtance from where they were born and bred. Hence there are many characterſtic diſtinctions, not only in phraſeology, but in accent, dreſs, manners, *&c.* not only between one county and another, but between different cities of the ſame county. There is a county in the North of England, very few of the natives of

which can pronounce the letter *r*, as it is generally pronounced in the other parts of the kingdom.

But if there is a much greater number of local vulgarisms in Britain than America, there is also for this very reason, much less danger of their being used by gentlemen or scholars. It is indeed implied in the very nature of the thing, that a local phrase will not be used by any but the inhabitants or natives of that part of the country where it prevails. However, I am of opinion, that even local vulgarisms find admission into the discourse of people of better rank more easily here than in Europe.

1. He *improved* the horse for ten days." This is used in some parts of New England for riding the horse.

2. *Raw salad* is used in the South for *salad*. N. B. There is no salad boiled.

3. *Chunks*, that is, brands, half burnt wood. This is customary in the middle colonies.

4. He is *considerable* of a surveyor, *considerable* of it may be found in that country. This manner of speaking prevails in the northern parts.

5. He will *once in a while*, i. e. *sometimes* get drunk. The middle states.

6. Shall I have *occasion*, i. e. opportunity to go over the ferry. New England.

7. *Tot* is used for *carry*, in some of the southern states.

The fifth class of improprieties may be called *common blunders through ignorance*. In this they differ from the former classes, that the similarity of one word to another, in pronunciation or derivation, makes ignorant people confound them and use them

promiſcuouſly, or ſometimes even convert them and uſe them each in the other's room. The following are examples.

1. *Eminent* for *imminent*. How often do we hear that a man was in eminent danger.

2. *Ingenious* for *ingenuous*. How common is it to ſay he is an ingenious young man—he is a young man of a very ingenious diſpoſition, they are both Engliſh words. Ingenious ſignifies of good capacity; ingenuous ſignifies ſimple, upright, ſincere; ingenuity, however, the word that ſeems to be derived from ingenuous, is uſed in both ſenſes, ſometimes for fairneſs, openneſs, candor; ſometimes for capacity or acuteneſs of invention. I ſhould think this laſt, though done by good authors, to be contrary to the analogy of the language, eſpecially as we have two words for theſe oppoſite ideas regularly derived from the correſpondent adjectives, ingenioufneſs and ingenuouſneſs.

3. Three or four times *ſucceſsfully*, for *ſucceſſively*. This is a blunder through ignorance, very common among the lower ſort of people in England.

4. *Intelligible*, for *intelligent*. It was a very intelligible perſon who told me.

5. *Confiſticate*, for *confiſcate*. The moſt ignorant of the vulgar only uſe this phraſe.

6. *Fictious* for *fictitious* That is no more than a *fictious* ſtory. This is uſed by people ſomewhat ſuperior to thoſe who would uſe the former.

7. *Veracity* for *credibility*. This is not a blunder in converſation only, but in ſpeaking and writing. I have ſome doubt of the veracity of this fact, ſays a certain author. Veracity is the character of the

perſon; truth or credibility, of the ſtory told. The ſame is the caſe with all, or moſt of the words, of ſimilar formation, capacity, rapacity, tenacity. Theſe all are applied to the perſon or the diſpoſition, not to a particular action of the one, or effect of the other. We ſay, a man of capacity—this work is a proof of capacity, but not the capacity of this performance; and ſo of the reſt.

8. *Suſceptive*, for *ſuſceptible*. I muſt acquaint the reader, that after I had marked this word as an example of the miſtakes men fall into from ignorance, I found it in ſome Engliſh writers, who cannot be called altogether contemptible, and alſo in Johnſon's Dictionary. As to the laſt of theſe, I ſhall have occaſion to make a remark or two upon that lexicographer under the next claſs, and therefore ſhall ſay nothing of it now. As to the other particular, I obſerve, that though the word is uſed by ſome writers, it is not only contrary to general practice, but contrary to the analogy of the tongue.—All the adjectives ending in *ive* are of an active, and thoſe ending in *able* or *ible* of a paſſive nature, as active, deciſive, communicative, ſignificative, demonſtrative, and on the contrary, able, capable, communicable, demonſtrable, contemptible.

9. They are ſo very *duplicit* that I am afraid they will *reſcind* from what they have done. Here are two errors in one ſentence. *Duplicit* is an adjective made by gueſs from duplicity, and *reſcind* is miſtaken, by the likeneſs of ſound, for *recede*.

10 *Detect* for *diſſect*. A lady, in a certain place at dinner, aſked a gentleman if he would be ſo good as *detect* that piece of meat for her. To theſe I might add a long liſt of errors, in which ignorance or or-

thography makes a vitious pronunciation, and that pronunciation continued by the ſame ignorance, makes a vulgar word in place of the true one, of which take one example—A gentleman writes to his friend, that on ſuch a day they had a ſmart *ſcrimitch*, for *ſkirmiſh*.

The ſixth claſs conſiſts of *cant* phraſes, introduced into public ſpeaking or compoſition. The meaning of *cant* phraſes, is pretty well known, having been fully explained as long ago as the days of Mr Addiſon — They riſe occaſionally, ſometimes, perhaps, from the happy or ſingular application of a metaphor or alluſion, which is therefore repeated and gets into general uſe, ſometimes from the whim or caprice of particular perſons in coining a term. They are in their nature temporary and ſometimes local. Thus, it is often ſaid, a man is *taken in*, he is *bilked*, he is *bit*, that was a *hit* indeed, that is not *the thing*, it was quite *the thing*. Innumerable others will occur to every reader. Sometimes the cant conſiſts in the frequent and unneceſſary repetition, or improper application of a word that is otherwiſe unexceptionable. Thus, when *vaſt* was in repute, a thing was vaſtly good, and vaſtly bad, vaſtly pretty, and vaſtly ugly, vaſtly great, and vaſtly little.

It is worth while, in remarking on the ſtate of language, to reflect a little on the attack made by Addiſon, Steel, Swift, Pope, and Arbuthnot, on many of theſe cant phraſes in their day, ſuch as bite, bamboozle, poſ. rep. mob. &c. Some of them they ſucceeded in baniſhing from, or rather prevented from being ever admitted into public diſcourſes and

elegant writing, ſuch as bite, bamboozle, &c. ſome they baniſhed from all polite converſation, ſuch as poſ. rep. plenipo. and ſome have kept their ground, have been admitted into the language, and are freely and gravely uſed by authors of the firſt rank, ſuch as *mob*. This was at firſt a cant abbreviation of *mobile vulgus*, and as ſuch condemned by the great men above mentioned; but time has now ſtamped it with authority, the memory of its derivation is loſt, and when a hiſtorian ſays an unruly *mob* was aſſembled in the ſtreets, or he was torn in pieces by the *mob*, no idea of any thing low and ludicrous is conveyed to the mind of the reader.

I promiſed, under this head, to make a remark upon Johnſon's Dictionary. It is a book of very great value on ſeveral accounts, yet it may lead ignorant perſons into many miſtakes. He has collected every word, good or bad, that was ever uſed by any Engliſh writer; and though he has, in the larger Dictionary, given his authorities in full, yet that is not ſufficient to diſtinguiſh them. There are inſtances in which this may be the very cauſe of wrong judgment. If an author of reputation has committed a ſingle error, his authority ſhould not be made any uſe of to ſanctify that error—ſometimes, alſo, the author's deſign is miſtaken. In the abridgement of that Dictionary, at the word *bamboozle*, you find added, a *low word*; but the authority is *Arbuthnot*: now would not any man imagine, who was not otherwiſe informed, that Arbuthnot was a low writer; whereas, in fact, he uſed that word only to diſgrace and put it out of practice. The lexico-

grapher would have acted more wisely not to have mentioned the word at all.

It would be very easy to make a large collection of cant or low phrases at present in use, such as helter skelter, topsy turvy, upside down, the Devil to pay, at sixes and sevens, put to his trumps, flung all in a heap. Every one of these has been seen in print, and many of the same stamp, as well as heard in conversation.

It is not long since I read, in a piece published by a sensible writer in this city, 'low methods of *shamming Abraham*.' Now, pray what is shamming Abraham? With some difficulty I have understood, that it is a cant phrase among seamen, for pretending sickness when they are well, and other fetches of the same kind. I should be glad to know how a foreigner could translate this expression into his own language.

Under the head of cant phrases, I would include all proverbial or common sayings introduced into the language, as well as trite and beaten allusions. Of the first sort are these, I want to put the saddle upon the right horse, the labouring oar lies upon you; of the second, the following, that is only *gratis dictum*, the Supreme Being by his almighty *fiat*, I will not pay any regard to *his ipse dixit*. All these are taken from printed pieces, some of them by authors not contemptible; the last of them, *his ipse dixit*, is of the most frequent use, and yet is the most pedantic and puerile of the whole. I conclude with observing, that a cant phrase, if it do not die by the way, has three stages in its progress. It is, first, a cant phrase; secondly, a vulgarism; third-

ly, an idiom of the language. Some expire in one or other of the two firſt ſtages; but if they outlive theſe, they are eſtabliſhed for ever. I have given an example of this above, in the word *mob*; and I think *topſy turvy* and *upſide down* have very nearly attained the ſame privilege.

The ſeventh claſs conſiſts of *perſonal blunders*, that is to ſay, effects of ignorance, and want of preciſion as an author, which are properly his own, and not reducible to any of the heads above mentioned. I ſhall give an example or two of this kind, becauſe it will make the meaning of the former claſſes more clear. The examples follow.

1. 'The members of a popular government ſhould be continually *availed* of the ſituation and condition of every part. The author of this did not know that avail is neither an active nor paſſive, but a reciprocal verb; a man is ſaid to *avail himſelf of* any thing, but not *to avail* others, or *be availed* by them.

2. 'A degree of diſſentions and oppoſitions under ſome circumſtances, and a political lethargy under others *impend* certain ruin to a free ſtate.' Here a neuter verb is made an active one. I have before given ſome examples in which this is done commonly, but in the preſent caſe it belongs to this author alone.

3. 'I ſhould have let your performance ſink into *ſilent diſdain*.' A performance may fall into contempt, or ſink into oblivion, or be treated with diſdain, but to make it ſink into *ſilent diſdain*, is a very crude expreſſion indeed.

4. He is a man of moſt *accompliſhed* abilities. A

man may be ſaid to be of diſtinguiſhed abilities or great accompliſhments, but *accompliſhed abilities* is wholly new.

5. 'I have a *total* objection againſt this meaſure.' I ſuppoſe the gentleman meant, that he objected to the whole, and every part of it. It was only an irregular marriage of the adjective to the wrong ſubſtantive.

6. 'An *axiom* as well eſtabliſhed as any Euclid ever demonſtrated.' Now, it happens that Euclid, notwithſtanding his great love of demonſtration, never demonſtrated axioms, but took them for granted.

I hope the reader will forgive me for not referring to the treatiſes from which theſe examples are taken. They were in general anonymous; and as it is probable many of the authors are alive, and may be of further uſe to their country, ſo being wholly unknown to me, without the leaſt degree of envy or malevolence, I mean not to injure but improve them.

FINIS.

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